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ITS CONDITION.

REAT BRITAIN: ITS POLICY.

A Series of Letters

ADDRESSED TO

ORD JOHN RUSSELL, M.P.

BY AN ENGLISH LIBERAL.

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LONDON:

JAMES RIDGWAY, 167, PICCADILLY.

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~~SECRET~~

It will be obvious to the readers of the following Letters that they were written—indeed, they were printed—before explanations were given in the House of Commons on Friday, the 25th inst.

The explanations touched only one, and that a small, although an important, part of the Italian question—the withdrawal of French and Austrian troops from the Pontifical States, to be followed by changes in the Roman Government.

If these alterations have to originate from the Pope, they will be illusory and dangerous. No one in his States will now place the slightest confidence in Papal concessions, or in priestly promises, made to avoid war. No high-minded Italian layman of intelligence or capacity will submit to the humiliation of becoming the Minister of a Pope whose faithlessness is unsurpassed by the treachery of any of his predecessors.

The evacuation of the Roman States will still leave Austria dominant in Italy, will still leave tyranny and cruelty rampant in Naples, oppression and despotism stronger than ever in Lombardo-Venetia, and misery the fate of the people of the Duchies.

Neither will that evacuation diminish the real danger of Italy—the antagonism between Austrian pride and Sardinian freedom. But it will associate all the hopes of Italy with the further and exclusive intervention of the French, and so augment the hostility of Austria and France.

Nor can it be expected that the Italians, now that a dread of war has concentrated the fears of all Europe on their wretchedness, will again make their independence a contribution to that “Peace of Europe,” during which their fetters have only been more cruelly rivetted.

The success, therefore, of the limited mission of Lord Cowley to Vienna will afford no solution to the greater number of the Italian questions discussed in the following Letters.

February 26, 1859.

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A Series of Letters

ADDRESSED TO

LORD JOHN RUSSELL, M.P.

LETTER I.

THE CASE STATED.

MY LORD,—I have often wondered what interest our own country, the England of which we are all justly proud, could possibly have in keeping Italy down. I quite agree with those who are of opinion that to Englishmen the interest of England must be the chief consideration; nor am I in the smallest degree disposed to recommend Quixotic interference on the behalf of Italy, or any other foreign country. But what I cannot, for the life of me, see, is the advantage we derive from helping the Austrians to misgovern Lombardy, from aiding the King of the Two Sicilies to turn his beautiful kingdom into a hell upon earth, and from propping up the tottering throne of that foul old Papacy which, on the whole, in the course of centuries, has done more damage to mankind than either gin or the small-pox. If the hour has arrived when, as far as Italy is concerned, the Pope, the King of Naples, and the Austrian Cæsar, with his three little satellites at Tuscany, Modena, and Parma, must disappear into space, what is that to us? Why should the sons of English mothers have their throats cut in any such quarrel? Why should your Lordship and myself, each in his degree, be called upon for war nine-pences and war half-crowns to maintain all this wickedness, and tyranny, and filth?

I address you, my Lord, with the deepest and most unfeigned respect, with that respect which high ability, earnestness of purpose, and active patriotism entitle their possessor to. For the last forty years, whenever there has been a chance of giving liberty a helping hand, I have always seen your Lordship's name in the van. The natural result has been that whenever some great constitutional dispute was to be settled, and the "Ins" and the "Outs" were in sore commotion, the regular cry of the

Lobby, and the Clubs, and the provincial exchanges, has been "Well, I suppose Lord John's inevitable." It is something to be the first man in the opinion of many—better still to be second man in the opinion of all. It is because your Lordship is pre-eminently such an one that I now venture to address you. For good or for evil—for weal or woe—the action of Lord John Russell must count for much upon the course of public affairs at all times, but now mainly so. The statesmen who are now at the helm in our own country clearly do not understand this Italian question, either as a question of parchments or a question of fact, or I am sure such kindly-natured English gentlemen, as they are, would never for a moment back up the atrocities of the Italian Governments. I don't jump to the conclusion that the Earl of Derby is a tyrant and a despot because he speaks of the troubles of Lombardy as merely "sentimental." The fact is, he knows no more about the matter than John Scott. So far from suspecting good Sir John Pakington of drinking "success to Spielberg and Antonelli with three times three," I do, in my conscience, believe that that most admirable and intelligent specimen of an English country gentleman could scarcely find it in his heart wantonly to crush an Italian fly. Mr. Walpole, I am sure, would labour night and day to promote the interests of his fellow-creatures in any part of the world; and so on, of the rest of the Derby Cabinet. The fact simply is that, with the exception, possibly, of Mr. Disraeli—and he, in 1856, was so far advanced in the Metternich policy as to speak of "Italy, as it is termed"—not one amongst them knows more about Italy and the Italians than about the municipal entanglements of Timbuctoo. With your Lordship I know the case is widely different. It is that noble and reasonable proposition enunciated by your Lordship on the first night of this present Session—namely, that "it were wisest to leave the Italians to settle their own affairs, without further interference from foreign nations"—which leads me to hope that, when the hour for definite decision has arrived, one English statesman at least will stand up amongst the Commons of England, and tell the truth to the House and to the country.*

* It is most curious to observe the interest which all the partisans of Austria take in the future welfare of Italy. Her sufferings have hitherto been with them matter of indifference, if not sport; but how anxious they are now for Italy! The Italians may think that they know what suits them best, and may quietly scorn the sympathy of their new sympathisers. Leave the Italians alone; that is what they want. What would be said by Englishmen, if the Italians had presumed to deplore the recent Alliance with France?

I suppose nobody will deny that, *primâ facie*, it would be more for the interests of commercial England that fertile Italy, with her 26,000,000 of ingenious, laborious, and shrewd inhabitants, should be buying and selling to the top of her bent, making discoveries in the mechanical sciences, and in agriculture, and carrying them out in practice, than that she should be droning out Latin hymns with the fervour and intelligence of a devout Buddhist, and muttering secret curses against the Austrian hussars. Your Lordship will see I am taking the selfish view first, although a nobler one would be more in harmony with my own feelings, and with the rights of the case. For the moment I would confine myself to cotton and common sense; for these, in the opinion of many, are the only equivalents. We know what our commerce with Italy has been since the conclusion of the great European war, and we know that its miserable proportions* are *entirely* due to the continuous and successful efforts of the Austrian Emperor and the Roman Pope, backed up, no doubt, by the punier efforts of such minor potentates as the Duke of Modena. So it has been, and so it must be in times to come. *The stability of the Imperial and Papal rule wholly depends on the ignorance and*

* The connexion between extensive commerce and political freedom has no better illustration than Italy.

In 1843, the value of British exports to Sardinia was 555,711*l.* From that year to 1847 it gradually declined to 355,366*l.* In the first year of Sardinian freedom, 1848, it rose to 611,992*l.*; as Constitutional Government in that kingdom has been consolidated, so has the value of our exports increased; until, in 1857, it had reached 1,350,076*l.*

The value of our direct exports to all Austria—that great Power which we are now called on to support—in 1857 was 1,108,710*l.*, or 241,365*l.* less than the value of our exports to the small, but independent and free, kingdom of Sardinia, whose ambition has been reprimanded by Lord Derby.

Of all our foreign customers having any status in the world, Austria is the most insignificant, as the following statement of our exports in 1857 will show:—

United States	£19,182,931
Hanse Towns	9,606,212
Holland	6,377,026
France	6,199,792
Brazil	5,447,566
Turkey	3,308,576
Russia	3,098,000
Spain.	2,009,345
Egypt	1,899,617
Austria	1,108,710

How much of this 1,108,710*l.* belongs to Lombardo-Venetia, the returns do not state. Probably, however, the greater part.

Even the Neapolitan States, in all their misery, are better customers of England than Austria.

misery of the people. In subsequent Letters I will give substantive proof of the truth of these general propositions—for the moment I must deal in general assertion. Now, I do not say that it would be wise for England to rush actively into a project for the political regeneration of Italy as a mere commercial speculation, although a good deal might be said on that behalf. I do say, however, that if the French Emperor chooses to run the chances of a war, with the object of turning the Austrians out of Lombardy, why Italy has everything to gain, and England nothing to lose, on the results of such a martial game. If Louis Napoleon were to break down in Lombardy, we certainly should have lost a better ally than Austria has ever proved to us in the hour of our need; and that is, as far as I can see, the only black deuce in our hand if there is to be fighting in Lombardy next spring. If the Austrians should get the best of it, things will remain as they are; if they are worsted, it will be much for the advantage of mankind.

I propose to deal elsewhere with the "Faith of Treaties" argument. I, therefore, simply mention it at this point, that it may not be supposed I am losing sight of so cardinal a matter. By all means let the faith of treaties be preserved. I, for one, should desire no better solution of the matter, confident as I am that if the treaty of Vienna—that Koran of timid political consciences—had been preserved, or is to be preserved, in its integrity, the days of both Pope and Cæsar in Italy are numbered. By all means, I say again, let us abide by the treaty of Vienna. But it must be read as Portia read the bond to Shylock. Let the Emperor have his pound of flesh—not a hairsbreadth more or less; or, by the laws of Venice——!

Let us, however, take the converse of this proposition—namely, that a French attack upon Austria in the Lombard kingdom is a violation of the treaty. Is it the first, or the second, or the third, to which England would have actively assented, or in which it would have silently acquiesced? I do not suppose, my Lord, that such matters attract the attention of a grave statesman; but I am one who walk about the streets, and gaze into shop-windows. I remember, a few years back, a picture in *Punch*. Right comically was it conceived, and comically worked out. The map of Europe, as settled by the treaty of Vienna, was spread upon the floor; three mighty dancers, booted and spurred, were dancing a reel upon this map in the joy of their hearts and the exuberance of their spirits. It was Cracow time. The three dancers were the Russian Czar, the

King of Prussia, and the *Emperor of Austria* ! Austria talk of violating treaties !

But what miserable stuff it all is. Lord Derby has gained the momentary good-will of the Three per Cents. by raising the cuckoo-note ; but every man, somewhat above an Austrian corporal in intelligence, knows perfectly well that the position which Austria has assumed in Italy, when examined even by the light of the last great settlement of Europe, is so untenable, that a dozen holes might be picked in the Austrian Emperor's coat, any one of which would serve as a sufficient cause for war. I grant that this is miserable trifling ; but if it be trifling on our side, it is trifling on the other. The world has moved round for well-nigh half a century since those old diplomatists did their work at Vienna. If the nations of Europe are to set to work, and cut each other's throats every time their handiwork is violated, Lord Macaulay's New Zealander will soon have a clean run over old Europe. Forty-four years have passed away. Let the rats and moths attend to their business, and let us attend to ours.

But even if the Treaty of Vienna be a holy thing, which men are bound to respect as we Englishmen do our Bible ; and if a Frenchman is a very wicked man, and violates it to the detriment of the Austrians, are we, therefore, to put on the shoes of swiftness, and gird on the sword of sharpness, and fall upon that abominable Frenchman's hinder parts, whilst he is engaged with the Austrians in front ? I would have my countrymen to consider that if Austria and France choose to bury next spring 100,000 combatants, or rather *hors-de-combat* warriors, on each side, in the plains of Lombardy, that is entirely their own affair. There is really no reason why we should complete this trefoil of glory by burying 100,000 Lancashire, and Aberdeenshire, and Tipperary peasants and artisans by the side of them.

I have said that I am on the selfish point of the argument, and I crave attention for a few more sentences ere I dismiss it. What has England to dread as a result, if the Sovereigns of the two great monarchies of Europe choose to throw away their armies upon a series of combats in the Italian plains ? How are we to be affected by it ? Let a few months go by, and we shall be found with resources intact, with forces unslaughtered, with treasure husbanded, with fleets afloat, ready to profit by the mistakes and misfortunes of our neighbours. Oh ! but if the French Emperor succeeds ! Think of Bayonne, and Berlin, and

Vienna, and the universal presence of French vivandières in the capitals of Europe! Does any one seriously believe this stuff?

If the French Emperor had any design against this country, he would scarcely commence operations by burying an army in Lombardy.

If at any future time he were to threaten the liberties of Europe (is it liberty which is now threatened?), would Austria be a less effective member of an European alliance, because disencumbered of her Italian provinces?

I trust there may be no misunderstanding as to what is required of us. I am, of course, arguing upon the assumption that present events will result in a collision between Austria and France. If called upon to choose between the two combatants, are we to select Austria as our ally? I am sure that if this matter is discussed in the English House of Commons, whilst your Lordship is there, there will always be one Member who will give the House the history of Anglo-Austrian alliances, and how much this country has been the gainer by them. Was it in 1806 or in 1812 that England reaped the benefit of her alliance with Austria? Was it when the late Russian war was alive, and our necessities the greatest, that Austria proved herself to us a true and loyal friend? What has Austria done for us, that on sentimental grounds—not Lord Derby's notion of sentiment—we should come forward to throw away our blood and treasure for her? Has it not ever been the same system of subsidies and ingratitude? I feel, my Lord, whilst liquidating my humble contributions to the fiscal obligations of this country, that I am actually paying for the support of several Austrian dragoons. The dragoons, to be sure, are dead and gone, but my father contracted the debt, and I must pay for it; and I have a strong misgiving that the dragoons in question did, after all, fight on the side of Napoleon Bonaparte.

But, my Lord, the miserable part of this story, and the part which I am very sure your Lordship will press with all the advantage of your earnest eloquence and well-trying truthfulness upon the House of Commons, is that all this verbiage about the faith of treaties is mere moonshine. If the French Emperor be resolved to come to blows with Austria, unless that Power will recede from her position in Italy, he will and can do so without violating one phrase or tampering with one iota of that valuable document. The "capital speeches" and the "able leaders" upon this point are worth just so many pinches of snuff. The treaty

will not be violated, but Austria will be attacked in Italy for all that. If the object of Lord Derby and his colleagues be to throw dust into the eyes of the country for a short time, no doubt they will have gained their end, although I do not see what advantage we are to derive from being blinded as to our true position. Regiments were *in transitu* from Algeria, and through the passes of the Brenner, whilst Englishmen were comforting themselves with the expectation that the war has been conjured away by these mystic incantations.

Another point in the present condition of this dispute is the singular indifference displayed to a conclusion which we should suppose would be manifest enough even upon cursory consideration. When mention is made of a French attack upon Lombardy, men shake their heads, and stand aghast at the idea. Talk, however, of intervention in Central Italy, and against that nothing is said. It is perfectly understood at Vienna, at Turin, at Paris, everywhere but in London, that the liberation of the Pontifical States from the cold gleam of the foreign bayonet and the colder shadow of the native priest, means, at no distant date, the liberation of Lombardy and Venetia from the hideous oppression of Austria; but with that we have nothing to do. Even if so awful a calamity should occur as that Austria should be compelled to govern the fertile valleys of the Po in a just and reasonable manner, or even to dis sever them from the Empire altogether as an appanage of one of the Princes of the House of Hapsburgh, the human race would, no doubt, tolerate such a conclusion resignedly enough. How would it be to-morrow were the French Emperor simply to withdraw his troops from Rome, declaring, at the same time, that he should consider the counter-occupation of Rome by the Austrians a legitimate cause of war? The Treaty of Vienna has nothing to do with such a contingency as this. Louis Napoleon has as perfect a right to say that he will not tolerate an Austrian occupation in Rome as being contrary to his policy, as we should have to object to a Russian occupation of Athens as contrary to ours. Considering what the influence of the Roman clergy still is in France, it is reasonable enough that he should not leave the Head of that Church in the exclusive guardianship of a foreign and a hostile Power. Will any one assert that he is obliged to retain his troops there — passive spectators of misrule which they cannot prevent? — for that is the alternative. Of course, within twenty-four hours of the withdrawal of foreign troops, the Pope and the priests

would be cast from power. Is that the best way of arriving at a permanent settlement? At such a conclusion we may arrive, but scarcely in that way.

I have said this much to show that the expectation of meeting the difficulties of this case by a little rose-water talk about the faith of treaties is a mere delusion. There is an Italian question to settle which has no connexion with the sheepskins of diplomacy. The real combatants will step down into the arena to fight upon the real grounds, unless we can arrive at another and more peaceable solution by the united action of Europe. Hitherto I have spoken only of the foreign combatants who are even now arming for the fight; but I would now say a word about the Italians themselves. Your Lordship is one of the very few amongst English statesmen who know how terrible their condition is. Your Lordship will appreciate as well or better than I can (although I may justly lay claim to some small knowledge of the facts in this case) the grim smile with which Lord Derby's declaration about the sentimental troubles of Lombardy will be read in that ruined province. But is it not true, my Lord, that the political and social condition of Italy is so bad, that it cannot be worse? If the result of an Italian war should be simply the exchange of French for Austrian masters, the Italians say with one voice, "Let the Frenchmen come, and see if we may not gain by the change!" I have no hesitation in saying, that the awful tyranny exercised over body and mind—over the domestic relations—over thought and speech—is so great, so complete, so highly organised, that with the obvious exception of Sardinia, and the possible exception of Tuscany, the Italians themselves would give the foul fiend a turn to escape from Imperial and Papal rule. It may be said, then, why do they not help themselves? It is very easy for us to talk in this way, but it should be remembered that, after the outbreak of 1848, they did their best, but were crushed by foreign troops ere they could turn round. Surely the twin defences of Rome and Venice will furnish two noble pages to history.* But what could the Italians, in the open field, do against Austria? They were destitute of artillery and munitions of war. The fortresses of the country were in the enemy's hands, and had to be re-conquered for Italy by the Italians. Cavalry was, of

* The Italians fought hard, and successfully very often, at Milan, Brescia, Vicenza, Treviso, Bologna, and other places besides. They were overpowered by number and discipline; and I should like to know where civilians have shown more pluck than the Italians have done on those occasions?

course, not forthcoming at the first sound of the tocsin ; and an efficient cavalry cannot be created in a day. With all these deficiencies pressing upon them, it does not seem to me that the Italian militia, hastily levied from a population to which the use of arms had been sternly and habitually denied, was so very discreditable. The resistance offered at Rome and Venice to scientific attacks, delivered with overwhelming force, and sustained until the strength of the besieged was fairly exhausted, would figure, not discreditably, in the military annals of any European nation. The insurrection of the United States of North America against our own country in Washington's days, has always been quoted as a wonderful effort on the part of militia against trained soldiers ; but it is most probable that if the hasty levies of the Americans had been exposed, not only to the English battalions, but to well-combined attacks from other European nations as well, the result might have been widely different, I am sure. I remember to have read of as much disunion in the American councils as ever these poor Italians have been accused of. It is notorious that there were seasons during the contest when the War of Independence was on the point of failure, although directed by Washington and protected by the Atlantic.

I will now state in a few words the aim which I have in view in addressing these few pages to your Lordship. My first proposition is that England will have deserved well of mankind if she would give her assistance towards such a solution of this Italian question as will lead to its permanent settlement. The only solution which will lead to such a result must involve the liberation of Italy from the grievous oppression, physical and spiritual, under which she is now groaning.

My second proposition is that, if we cannot arrive at such a solution in a peaceful way (which is most of all to be desired), it will be an enduring stain upon the honour and character of this country if we allow an Englishman to fix a bayonet or pull a trigger against a nation struggling to be free from oppression as foul and intolerable as ever afflicted humanity. I draw this consequence, that, if Austria chooses to retain her present hold on the Italian Peninsula by force of arms, and if the French Emperor is minded to dispute this matter with her on the plains of Lombardy next spring, at the very least the affair is none of ours. The Italians know best if they are willing to accept French assistance, and to risk the consequences to themselves. Let them fight it out, I say, on the south of the Alps in their own fashion—it concerns us not.

As my justification for both or either of these propositions, I propose to give in a few words an outline—

1. Of the present condition of the Papal States.
2. Of the present condition of the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom under Austrian rule, and to show how far the grievances of the Italian subjects of Austria deserve to be characterised as “sentimental.”
3. Of the dealings of the King of the Two Sicilies with his subjects, both on *terra firma* and in his insular dominions, and of the minor States.

Having done this, I would discuss briefly—

4. The value and nature of this argument, derived from the faith of treaties, especially the Treaty of Vienna.
5. I would then briefly suggest what the diplomatic action of Europe, with regard to Italian affairs, has been since the settlement of 1815, making particular mention of the discussion which took place during the recent Conference at Paris.
6. I would examine the argument derived from the supposed unfitness of the Italians for political and religious liberty.
7. And, finally, I would, with all the earnestness of the deepest conviction, implore my countrymen to consider what their conduct should be in this matter.

Each of these heads I propose to discuss in a separate Letter.

I know not if anything that an unknown writer can hope to say will be of sufficient avail to arouse at least the sympathies of free England for the dire agonies of a nation in its great, possibly its last, attempt to liberate itself from most hideous oppression. It will, however, be a consolation to me to reflect that at a critical moment I have been able to stand forth as witness of misery which I have seen and sorrows which I have shared.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c., &c.

LETTER II.

THE PAPAL STATES.

MY LORD,—I have said before, I know not what interest England can have in the thralldom of Italy, still less do I know what interest she can have in the maintenance of the temporal power of the Pope. Even granting that Antonelli's rule in the Papal States were as good as it is in reality foul and tyrannical, why should England interfere to prop up that form of Government upon the inhabitants of the Roman States against their will? or, which amounts to the same thing, why should England intervene between this oppressed people and the Chief of a Foreign State who is willing to assist them in the hour of their deep distress? Interference or non-interference must be the rule. If we accept the first alternative, why should we not leave the French Emperor to take his own course in the Pontifical States for the benefit of the people;—if the second, what business have the Austrian Legions in the Legations, and behind the fortifications of Ancona, which they have raised themselves? Even if we decide for ourselves to stand aloof, I do not see how we can escape from this dilemma. My present purpose, however, is to explain what the true significance is of this Pontifical rule, and what it is England is defending when she directly, or by inevitable consequence, stands between the successor of Saint Peter and the wretched creatures whose sufferings would surely have excited the fervent indignation of the Apostle.

On many points, casual travellers in Italy would do well to distrust their impressions. Nature throws so beautiful a veil over human anguish in that lovely land, that a man might travel from Reggio to Trent, and wonder why so much is said about the sufferings of the Italians. Not so in the Papal States, with the exception of the country immediately about Bologna: here you see the result of oppression, in its full and hideous development. The soil is out of cultivation; the roads are infested with brigands; the peasantry are as ill off as the Irish peasantry of thirty years ago, even if we go to Connaught for our illustration; a bar is raised against human progress in every

form. The policy of modern Rome has been deliberately and uniformly so directed as to produce the impoverishment and degradation of its own subjects, as the conditions of its own stability. What meets the eye is, however, but little by the side of what is unseen. Let any one who has lived sufficiently long amongst the Romans to get behind the curtain which priestly power has drawn over the sufferings of the people, but tell what he knows of the internal economy of Roman households, and no man would look his fellow-creatures in the face, and stand forward as the defender of such a system. To do this truly is impossible, until modesty and shame are forgotten. The hand would refuse its office were it called upon to describe the things that are done by priests in their own peculiar domain. I must, for decency's sake, turn to matters which can be publicly discussed, such as misgovernment, rapine, spoliation, tortures, murder, and the like.

Before speaking, however, of the condition of the Roman States as it actually is, I would call a competent witness to describe what it was twenty years ago. When I mention the honoured name of Massimo D'Azeglio, no one, I think, will challenge the competence or the credibility of the witness. In the year 1846, this illustrious writer published a book to which he gave the title of "*Degli ultimi casi di Romagna.*" At page 42 of this valuable work I find the following passage: "The economical condition of the Papal States and its finances are brought to such a point that Europe is well aware of its absurdities and impending ruin ; for that Government not only exceeds the revenue in expenses, but stops up all the sources of public weal. The prohibitory system injures both imports and exports, by duties which ignorance calls protective—by foolish prohibitions, which instead of favouring national industry, favour the monopoly of a few only, by which labour and production are hampered, by which smuggling is encouraged—a fatal source of corruption, of immorality, and hostile to Government itself, which thus trains a class of desperadoes always ready to join those who wish to injure it. The effect of this system is to impoverish all in order to enrich some; and, to complete the absurdity, the collection of duties is farmed out to a Company, whose profits too are squeezed from the consumers. On the other hand, the Government will not listen to anything that might tend to improve the public weal. It sees in everything conspiracy, rebellion, revolution. Rome has said,

"I don't believe in railroads.' All Europe laughs at this, but the Papal subjects don't laugh. To every other improvement, the same obstinate prohibition or difficulties. Joint-Stock Banks, Agricultural or Commercial Associations, forbidden. Land is oppressed by unbearable taxes, and as there are no means of disposing of the produce, the agricultural class is every year poorer. There is no commerce; and that part of Italy, placed on two seas, on the high road to the East, rich in minerals, with the most fertile soil, inhabited by a population on whom Providence has bountifully bestowed quickness, foresight, energy, strength, and boldness, has two such harbours as Civita Vecchia and Ancona empty. And would to God, that if the Government prevented the subjects from, I will not say enriching themselves, but from struggling on, no one were to rob and grind them down with taxes!—would that the expenses were moderate!" So far D'Azeglio, speaking of the condition of affairs in the Papal States in 1846; but since he wrote matters have gone on from bad to worse. The apprehensions excited in the Government by the events of 1848-49 have made this systematic tyranny even more tyrannous, and converted their traditional distrust into the very frenzy of suspicion.

A few facts must be patent, even on the most cursory glance cast upon the Papal States at the present time. In the first place, the affectionate loyalty of the people is stimulated by the permanent and systematic presence of two armies of occupation—the one Austrian, the other French. A well-governed country—or rather, a country which is not abominably misgoverned—does not commonly require the presence of foreign bayonets for the maintenance of order. There is a total want of public instruction. The Pope cannot tolerate knowledge in his dominions. There is universal brigandage and open robbery in the rural districts; aye, even at the very walls of Rome. There is universal misery—I mean misery in its most vulgar and appreciable form—want of food, raiment, and suitable shelter. Nor can you say, as you would if speaking of English pauperism, that if there is one person in a union workhouse maintained at the public charge, there are twenty-one out of it, all living in such a manner that they have not the inclination to appeal to the State provision. In the Papal States, misery is the rule, comfort the rare exception. There is universal suspicion and distrust. At Rome, a man dare not converse openly with his neighbour upon any but the most trifling subjects. There are spies in every corner: the police

can arrest without warrant, and banish or imprison without trial. If you can ever persuade a Roman to speak out, he will tell you what the judgments styled *economici* mean. Who can describe the horrors of a Roman prison? Mr. Gladstone has told us somewhat of how these matters are arranged at Naples. At Rome they are to the full as bad—worse they cannot be than the hellish dens in which King Ferdinand is wont to immure his loving subjects. *At Rome it often happens that the existence of prisoners is forgotten!* When the attention of the Government has been called to the cases of individuals, and there has really been the intention of sending for them and bringing them to judgment, it could not be done. They were rotting away somewhere—dead or alive, nobody could tell anything about them. Should the case of a political prisoner ever arrive at the stage of trial, it is good to remember that the *Sacra Consulta*, when dealing with political offenders, never reveals to the accused the names of the witnesses who appear against him, or even allows him to see them; nor do they leave him the choice of a defender: the Court assigns the counsel for the defence. The sentences passed are such as might have been expected from such a form of procedure. Twenty years at the galleys for such an offence as that of lighting a blue light on the anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic, or of hindering an individual from lighting a cigar "*from party motives*," are surely somewhat out of proportion with these several crimes.

I am painfully aware that in the narration of such matters a writer lays himself open to the charge of exaggeration. I wish that considerations of space permitted me to cite facts in proof of every assertion I make. I cannot do so, or this pamphlet would assume the proportions of a volume. In this instance, however, I will depart from my usual rule, because the fact stated is so incredible—so monstrous. Twenty years at the galleys because one man prevents another from smoking a cigar! The official journal of Rome is now before me—the *Giornale di Roma*—it is Number 117, for the year 1851. The date is Wednesday, the 24th of May. The victim's name is Pietro Ercoli. His case was tried before the *Sacra Consulta*. The names of the judges are given, and the sentence at length, headed by an intimation that the judges retired to deliberate "*Invocato il Nome Santissimo di Dio*," and they arrived at the conclusion that Pietro Ercoli was to spend twenty years at the galleys because he had prevented Luigi

Giannini from smoking his cigar! Carlo Rinaldi, one of the witnesses, deposed that in his opinion Ercoli was joking. By the same sentence Rinaldi was directed to be tried for perjury on account of that opinion!

But, whilst I am upon this subject, I would mention that, with regard to political offences, the Pope's Government use a little artifice, in order to shift the responsibility off their own shoulders when security is desired. The truth is, Austria is the Pope's hangman. The Adriatic provinces have, for nine or ten years past, been under martial law and Austrian occupation. Any Papal subject in these provinces who may be suspected and denounced is dragged before an Austrian court-martial. He is debarred from all means of defence. *TORTURE is used to extract confession*—and then—the halter, or the firing party!

The account of the murders committed in Ferrara on the 17th of March, 1853, by the Austrian troops under Radetzki's authority, is open on my table: and throughout Italy it is well known that the facts are true. On the morning of that day *Domenico Malagutti*, a young surgeon of Ferrara; *Giacomo Succi*, a private gentleman; and *Luigi Parmeggiani*, an inn-keeper of the same town, were led out by Austrian soldiers, blind-folded, forced upon their knees, and shot. They had been accused of treason against the Pope's Government, inasmuch as they had meditated measures for the overthrow of his temporal power. I do not mean for one moment to assert that any Government, even that of the Pope, has not the full right to maintain its own authority, and to punish all attempts at revolution; but the offence must be proved. In this present case there was no attempt at proof beyond such as might have been used in the Chambers of the Inquisition. These unfortunate persons, and nine others, were incarcerated in the citadel of Ferrara for seven or eight months. The examining judge was an Austrian Captain of Hussars. In the absence of proof this military judge had recourse to the *torture* of the accused. They were beaten with sticks; they were kept without food till nature was on the point of giving way; they were chained in the form of hoops; they were compelled to witness each other's misery; they were constantly told that a firing party was waiting for them, and that they were about to be led out to immediate execution. In the night their brutal gaolers would break in upon the sleep which afforded them a brief respite from their anguish, rouse them up, and shake before their

startled eyes a hook and a halter. Each was told in turn that his companion had confessed, and that he might as well make a clean breast of it; or, that if he did not confess, his companions would instantly be put to the direst torture. To give a grotesque colour to the whole transaction—there is nobody like an Austrian for such work—the examinations were written down in German, of which the accused did not understand one word, and they were compelled to affix their signatures to depositions written in characters of which they knew not the significance. The disturbances which occurred at Milan, in February, 1853, practically settled their fate; Marshal Radetzki felt that a little bloodshed might tend to keep Italy quiet, and so these wretched men were shot upon evidence taken in the manner described. The English consul at Ferrara was duly informed of these transactions, and his interference was, of course, at once solicited. The poor creatures appealed to their natural Sovereign; but no help was to be expected in that quarter. The Papal Government is ready enough either to shed blood, or to see it shed.

Italy can remember well how—before the present man's time—Cardinal Rivarola, Legate of Ravenna—he himself—on the 31st of August, 1825, condemned to various punishments FIVE HUNDRED and EIGHT persons, seven of them to death, and all by one sentence. They were mainly charged with Carbonarism, Freemasonry, &c. On the 20th of February, 1832, again Cardinal Albani entered Bologna with the Austrians—organised a military tribunal, and commenced a wholesale system of shooting and imprisoning, he himself defining the crime of treason, and assigning the evidence necessary to support it. It was this worthy who hit upon the notable idea of the Swiss regiments, who, at the time of which I speak, were known, in cold blood, to have murdered fathers of families—inoffensive men; nay, women and children. Austrian officers even remonstrated against the excesses of these ruffians, but the Pope and his advisers stood calmly by, and smiled approvingly. The system, then, under which the Ferrarese prisoners were left to military execution was not one of yesterday.

In the seven years following the events of 1848-49, there were 60 capital executions at Ancona: at Bologna, 190. Some of these men were executed for the most trivial crimes: a robbery of a trifling sum, an infraction of the law about carrying or possessing in their houses arms, was a sufficient cause for the punishment of death. In illustration of what I have said above

of the tortures practised upon the poor Ferrarese prisoners, I would add here an extract from a sentence pronounced by the Criminal Court of Bologna, on the 16th of June, 1856. Fifty persons had been accused of the crimes of brigandage and robbery before this Court. Here is a translation of part of the sentence:—"In the examination of this cause, we have had occasion to deplore a series of violent and ferocious (*violenti e feroci*) means employed to suggest or extort from the accused the confessions of their crimes." By an edict bearing date the 30th July, 1855, Cardinal Antonelli has restored as a punishment the use of the "*cavalletto*" or "*chevalet*," the latin *equuleus*, an instrument of torture used by the Pagan Emperors against the early Christians.

The crime of brigandage is very much on the increase throughout the Roman States; and how can it be otherwise, when the peaceable inhabitants are forbidden to keep arms for their own defence? It may, perhaps, be worth while to give another extract from the judgment just quoted, because it affords official proof of the insecurity of life and property throughout the Papal States: it bears date, as we have already said, June, 1856. "During the years just past, innumerable crimes have afflicted this province. Robberies, thefts, scalings (by ladder) have taken place everywhere, and at all hours. The number of malefactors, and their audacity, encouraged by impunity, has been steadily on the increase." Human beings, of course, end by adapting themselves to the exigencies of any situation. The Roman farmers and landed-proprietors are in the habit of paying blackmail to the brigands in their neighbourhood, and thus secure immunity from their attacks. And in July last several hundred of the most respectable citizens of Bologna petitioned the Cardinal Legate, Milesi, to protect their lives and property, which were often attacked in the day time in the streets of the city, in which are stationed 8,000 Austrian soldiers.

Another grief that presses heavily upon these unfortunate States is, that practically, to a great extent, they are governed not only by ecclesiastics, but by foreigners. Sicilians, Lombards, and Tuscans, have been Legates and Delegates in the Provinces. The Legates are exactly like Turkish Pashas—a few foreigners, with unlimited power, over the provinces. On the benches of the superior tribunals are to be found Spaniards, French, and Germans. For ten years, a Genoese was Secretary of State—that is, virtually, Prime Minister. The Sovereign himself is not necessarily a native: how then can the Roman

Government be influenced by that feeling of patriotism which, to a certain extent, actuates the measures and inspires the councils of even the worst Governments? All offices of any importance are filled by ecclesiastics; to the laity only belongs the privilege of paying taxes. All the Ministries—Antonelli is now, provisionally, even Minister of War; all the Embassies and Diplomatic positions; all the chief posts at Court (*Maggiordomo, Maresciallo di Camera, &c.*); the benches of the following Courts: the *Sacra Consulta*; the *Rota*; the *Segnatura di Giustizia*; the *Tribunale Laurenziano*, and partly the Tribunal of the R. C. A. and the Criminal Tribunal; the two great Secretaryships, *dei Brevi* and *dei Memoriali*; the *Udienza Santissima*; the Sacred Congregation *Degli Studi*; the Presidency and the Vice-Presidency of the Council of State; the Presidency and Vice-Presidency of the Finance Chamber; the Direction of the Police; the Direction of Public Health and of the Prisons; the Direction of the Archives, and many others. Then there are the separate jurisdictions of the Bishops, with extensive powers (of these there are 67); the Inquisition; the Privileged Congregations; all Educational Posts; the Direction of all Charitable Institutions—all, all ecclesiastics! However, it cannot be too broadly stated, that in the Rome of 1859 it is the Cardinal Minister of State who is all-in-all—and that man is Antonelli!

As I have made mention of these episcopal courts, I would add one little fact in illustration of their methods of proceeding. On the 8th of March, 1850, the Archbishops and Bishops of "the Marche" published an edict against swearing, Sunday or festival breaking, violation of fasting, &c. The 54th Article prescribes that the names of the informers and witnesses shall be kept secret. By the next Article (55) the informers are to have half the fine, and if the punishment be not a fine, then the culprit shall pay 50 baiocchi (about two shillings) to the informer, whose name is kept secret.

During the period 1814-57 the *extraordinary* expenses of public instruction have amounted to 242,000 francs; the charge for escorting the mail, to secure it against the attacks of highwaymen, has been 215,000 francs. It has cost just 1,000*l.* less to escort the Pope's mail than to educate his subjects.

What, I say again, has the Roman Government to show for its 360,000,000 francs (about 14,500,000*l.*) of public debt? A few millions were spent, much against the grain, at the time of the hostile operations against Venice; about 5,000,000 (200,000*l.*)

on Public Works; 400,000 francs upon Prisons, Extraordinary Commissions, &c., consequent upon the return of the Pope. The Pontifical States have no railroads. The fortresses are without guns or munitions of war; the troops miserable, and imperfectly armed. In the department of commercial marine we find capital involved to the magnificent extent of 100,000 francs (4,000*l.*). All communications through the States are difficult; the roads are infested by brigands; the Po threatens continual overflow.

The collection of the common taxes costs 31 per cent.; the collection of the revenue from the execrable lotto is 62 per cent.; that from the monopoly of salt and tobacco 46 per cent. From 1848 to 1857, the expenses of foreign troops to keep down the inhabitants has been about 1,000,000*l.*

From 1811 to 1857 the sum of the revenue of the Papal Government has amounted to 358,265,850 scudi (equal to about 1,880,893,000 francs, or 75,500,000*l.*). When speaking of the financial system of the Papal States, it must always be remembered that ecclesiastical property of all descriptions is free from taxation. The regular expenses incurred during the same period were 387,937,724 scudi. During that time, therefore, the Government has spent nearly 30,000,000 of scudi—that is, about 6,000,000*l.* more than it received. Now all this has been squeezed out of a population rich in nothing but their poverty and misery—without commerce, manufactures, or trade.

Whilst turning over books, documents, and notes referring to Italian matters, I came, my Lord, on this passage in Farini, who is speaking of the condition of the Roman States as it was forty years ago:—"There was no care for the cultivation of the people, no anxiety for public prosperity: Rome was a cess-pool of corruption, of exemptions and privileges; a clergy made up of fools and knaves, in power; the laity, slaves; the treasury plundered by gangs of tax farmers and spies: all the business of Government consisted in prying into and punishing the notions, the expectations, and the imprudences of the Liberals." Farini had been speaking of the political exiles from the Pontifical States—he goes on to say:—"A great blunder this in Government, to send abroad a multitude of exiles, who, travelling from land to land, make a display of their misery, and excite the sympathy of the nations; expose to view the sores of a State; give it a bad name in other countries; and, likewise, by the ties of family and of sect, keep alive in them its perpetual hates and hopes. When the devout Pontiff Pius VII. gave up his soul

to God, on the 20th of August, 1823, the spirit of party was corroding the bonds of society, especially in the **Four Legations**, and the Pontifical Government had little either of love at home, or of respect abroad." Since that August day, Leo XII., Pius VIII., and Gregory XVI., have gone successively to their account, and Pius IX. now reigns in their place. Austrian soldiers are at Bologna and Ancona. French soldiers parade the streets of Rome with their field-batteries, and with all circumstance of martial array. But still the Pontiff, on Easter Sunday, steps out on the balcony of St. Peter's, and, with extended hand, wafts his blessing *urbi et orbi*, as in former days. Priam with nerveless hand cast his dull javelin amongst the combatants, who had mounted the breach, and carried Troy. Alas ! poor man !

I have the honour to be, &c., &c., &c.

LETTER III.

LOMBARDO-VENETIA.

MY LORD,—When the Address in answer to the Speech from the Throne was discussed the other day in the House of Peers, Lord Derby spoke of the grievances endured by the Italian subjects of Austria as “sentimental.” Now, men’s ideas upon the subject of sentimental troubles are somewhat different. Caroline’s indifference, the prolonged residence at Boulogne-sur-Mer of an English shareholder, the rupture of an old friendship, baffled ambition, disappointment on Epsom Downs, may or may not be sentimental troubles according to the constitution of the individual. I think, however, it would be admitted upon all sides, that to be tied up to the triangles, and receive six dozen of lashes upon one’s naked shoulders from relays of Austrian corporals, is a real personal inconvenience, and beyond the domain of sentiment. I think, too, Lord Derby would admit that it would have been something more than a sentimental trouble if, eighteen months ago, Sir Cornewall Lewis had conveyed to him an intimation by post that twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, seventy per cent. of the income derived from his Lancashire estates and other property was required for Her Majesty. Nor would it have tended to make things more pleasant had a wing of the Connaught Rangers been forwarded by rail to Knowsley, with directions to partake of the noble earl’s hospitality until the demand was liquidated. Lord Derby may, perhaps, call this a sentimental trouble; but I am very sure that a little more than 200 years ago the unjust and arbitrary demand of about five shillings and sixpence from a country gentleman in Buckinghamshire cost a dynasty in England its throne, and a monarch his head.

Now, I want to explain in a very few pages what these “sentimental” troubles of the Lombards and Venetians really are. I am perfectly aware that I am laying myself open to that most convincing argument at vestries, “What is that to us? If the Lombards are bastinadoed, flogged, locked up, chained, murdered by military commission, why do they not

throw off the yoke? If they are fit for freedom, why do they not free themselves? It is entirely their own affair." So, in one sense, it undoubtedly is: when a man is flogged or shot, he may very properly be said to have a close, almost an exclusive interest in the transaction. We must not, however, lose sight of the important consideration, that there are men and nations who do not take this Cripplegate-within view of human affairs, and that now while I write Europe is, according to common belief, on the eve of a general war, mainly because these Lombards are handled in so pitiless a way. But even granting that Austria has a clear and undisputed right to treat her Italian subjects as Legree, the Mississippi planter, handled his negroes, still it is important for us to know the true state of the case, because it may reasonably be presumed that the method or system which Austria enforces in Lombardy is the system or method which she would support throughout the whole of the Italian Peninsula. Practically, she does support it in its integrity in the Pontifical States and the Two Sicilies, and, to a less extent, in the Grand-Duchy of Tuscany and the two petty Duchies of Modena and Parma. Now, the most eager stickler for the faith of treaties would scarcely say that the Sovereigns and Diplomats of Europe, when engaged in their vocation at Vienna in 1815, bound their posterity to all time to assist Austria in extending such a dominion over the whole of the Italian Peninsula.

Did my space admit, I would have been glad to give a slight sketch of the leading incidents in the dismal chronicle of Lombardy between 1815-48. Alas! for all the noble hearts which were broken—for all the fair hopes which were blighted—for all the human agony which was endured during that long period of misrule! I cannot do so now. The victims have, for the most part, carried their sentimental troubles before another tribunal; and the authors and the instruments of this evil are there too, each one to answer for his share in the work. These sorrows, however, are the troubles of another day, and only so far affect the present aspect of the question as that they are not forgotten or forgiven. I will confine myself to the briefest summary of the manner in which the Italian subjects of the House of Austria have been handled since 1848, and of what they are enduring at the present hour. I will leave it then to your Lordship—if you shall see fit—to enforce it upon the attention of the English nation with that weight and gravity which any declaration from so high an authority can at all times com-

mand, that Lord Derby's view of the grievances of the Lombards is not quite correct, and that they have but little in common with the sickly sentimentalities of a puling and love-sick girl.

We all of us remember that year 1848. Europe, the old respectable Europe, the Europe of diplomatists and sovereigns, of the Metternichs and the Ferdinands, seemed to be crumbling into dust, at the signal given by a pistol-shot in Paris—at the corner, yonder, of the Rue des Capucines. I remember Paris well in those days, and any man who witnessed that spectacle is not likely to forget it the longest day he has got to live. In Berlin, at Vienna, at Dresden, similar scenes occurred. With these, and with the blame which may have attached to the actors in these bloody dramas, I have nothing to do. There was one town, however, in which the sympathies of humanity went with every man, woman, and child who took the side of the revolutionary party, and that town was Milan. Europe knew that it was just, right, and proper that the Austrians should be driven out of a city and a province in which they had exercised such fearful oppression, and be dismissed from a trust which they had so grievously betrayed. Well-disciplined battalions for once gave way before the indignation of a people, and for the time Milan was once again free. I need not here tell how the wave of conquest flowed back. I am only concerned just now with the conduct of the Austrian authorities, when, by help of their bayonets, they had regained possession of the province and the town, and when, in point of fact, the chapter of sentimentalities had been once more re-opened. On the 20th of September, 1848, there was published, in the name of the Emperor Ferdinand, an Imperial Manifesto, which announced a full and plenary amnesty throughout the Lombardo-Venetian provinces to all persons who had borne any part in the Revolution of 1848. The Emperor was made to declare that *his will* was, that his Italian dominions should receive such institutions as were in harmony with their real wants and the necessities of their national development; at the same time, that their union with the other provinces of the Empire was maintained. These were only general promises; but the Emperor passed from the domain of vague generalities to more special matter. He pledged his Imperial word that there should be a *bonâ fide* representation of the Lombard people. These deputies—freely elected—were to have an effective control over the administration of the province. We may grant to Lord Derby that, up to the present, we have not

yet got out of the region of sentiment, for the desire for freedom is but a sentiment, although the noblest of all.

We have now to see how these promises were kept. There has ever been a strange touch of rough humour about the oppression exercised by Austria over her subjects. It is, indeed, the humour of the barrack-room; and the point of the joke ordinarily consists in a military execution, or some piece of practical irony of the like kind. How was the general amnesty to be got rid of?—how were the Emperor's promises to be kept, and yet the old discipline to be restored? In this way: the Emperor had observed, with much commiseration, that many of his faithful Lombard subjects had suffered from the excesses of 1848. It was but just that they should be indemnified for their losses; and, equally so, that they who had done the mischief should make practical reparation. Could matters be reasoned out more fairly? Marshal Radetzki was chosen as the instrument of the Emperor's compassion. An "extraordinary" contribution was announced upon all persons who had taken part in the revolutionary movement; and for the purpose of the levy they were told off in three categories. 1st. There were the members of the Provisional Government. 2ndly. All persons who had acted as members of the Ministerial Committee. 3rdly. All persons who had acted a conspicuous part on the revolutionary side, or who had assisted it by material or *intellectual* means. The conclusion was, that if, within six weeks, any person included in any of these three classes had not paid up the sum assigned to him, his property was to be forfeited. The decree was carried out with Austrian rigour; for in all laws which have confiscation for their ultimate object, the Medes and Persians might, with advantage, have taken a leaf out of the book of Viennese statesmen. I would ask the author of the theory of Italian sentimentality to consider what is implied by the execution of an arrangement of this sort—when the denunciation of a renegade Italian and the decision of an Austrian *employé* are to be held conclusive as to the measure of guilt. "*The property of all persons who had INTELLECTUALLY assisted the Revolutionary movement of 1848 to be forfeit!*" Such was the opening of the first trench against the Imperial amnesty.

Well, time wore on, and new events occurred—notably one at Novara—which effected the relative position of the Austrians and Lombards; which inspired old Father Radetzki with the belief that the Lombardo-Venetian provinces was again

-delivered into his hand. I scarcely blame the old man; he was but the incarnation of a system. From his point of view, he saw that there had been a mutiny, that the mutiny was suppressed, that the offenders were at the mercy of the General, and that he was the General. His fidelity to his Emperor, his sense of discipline, his soldier's pride, his national vanity, and his conscientious conviction that the military *régime* was the best for Lombardy, had all been wounded to the quick. The hour for reprisals had come. An amnesty had been announced; but then it was not to be expected that the Emperor should feed and clothe the unfaithful *employés* who had turned against him in the hour of Austria's extremity. All such were turned about their business. It is an easy step from fact to suspicion. When all persons in the pay of the Government who had actually and notoriously taken part against it were cast adrift, the next step was to get rid of all who had been, or who were, *suspected*. Suspicion amounted to proof, and proof to ruin. Thus it is that justice is administered in Lombardo-Venetia when an Austrian Field-Marshal—and he, perhaps, the best of the number—holds the scales. When the public offices and posts of administration had thus been purified, the next step was to attack the professions. The Hospitals, the Universities, the Law Courts, were closed in the face of all youths who had taken part, or who were suspected to have taken part, in the movement of 1848. Thus it was that the Imperial amnesty, confirmed by the Treaty of Peace between Austria and Piedmont (6th August, 1849), was construed at Vienna and Milan.

By the second article of that treaty it was stipulated that Piedmont should pay to Austria 75,000,000 francs for the expense of the war, and to compensate Austrian subjects for the injuries they had sustained in consequence of it. Not one penny—not one farthing of this great sum has ever been paid to any Lombard, although Lombard families by the hundred and the thousand had been reduced to absolute beggary by the operations of the contending armies.

The amnesty, indeed, had been proclaimed; but a measure of that kind, as the term implies, refers only to past offences. There is no such thing as a prospective amnesty. Memory does not look forward, but Austrian statesmen do. They could readily foresee—even without any violent effort of statesmanship—that the day might arrive when a dirty little Milanese boy might, from the purest motives, shout out "*Viva l'Italia!*" in the square before the *Duomo*—and then! Then it might

become necessary to take guarantees for the future, although the past was entirely wiped out from the Imperial memory! On the 18th of August, 1849, the Austrian garrison was celebrating the feast-day of the Emperor. A courtesan, who had found great favour in the eyes of the Austrian officers, thrust forth from the window—it was in front of the cathedral these things happened—a batch of Austrian flags. A parcel of miserable boys—the ordinary refuse of any large city—felt their patriotic susceptibilities affronted by the display, and cast some muck or dirt, which they had picked off the pavement, against these symbols of Empire. Austria rose equal to the occasion. The troops were called out, all persons within reach were arrested, carried off to the castle, and summarily flogged by the brutal soldiers: among them were two girls—Ernesta Gatti, aged twenty, and Maria Conti, aged eighteen.* It is but right to add, that when the Austrians regained possession of Milan they were very liberal in their distribution of “stick.”

You may flog a woman, however—and therefore be a ruffian deserving of the gallows—but because a woman is flogged, it does not necessarily follow that a nation is ruined. This desirable end is attained by the imposition of taxes and levies, and by general measures which do not make one’s blood curdle at their mere mention, but which in the end ruin a country; and when you speak of the ruin of a country, you mean that thousands, perhaps millions, of your fellow-creatures have perished by a miserable and lingering death. Now, I wish Lord Derby to understand that a portion of the earth’s surface—I am speaking of Lombardy—which should be as productive as the Scottish Lothians, without the efforts expended on that Ploughman’s Paradise, is stricken with the curse of sterility. It must have required much ingenuity, infinite pains, to have brought about such a result; so fertile is the soil, so kindly the heavens, so happy its geographical position. Well, the Austrians have fairly pitted their efforts against the beneficence of the Almighty; and to speak the truth, for the moment they seem to have got the best of it. I cannot tell how a grain of seed corn pushes forth its sprout, rises into a stalk, swells into an ear—that is Nature’s secret; but I can tell well enough how the Austrians in Lombardy can stop the harvest’s growth.

* The fact is recorded in the “*Rassegna degli affari ufficiali*,” &c. published at Milan in 1849, tom. ii., p. 351, by order of the Austrian Government. We hope Lord Derby is sentimental enough to condemn, as a gentleman, the sale of a Government like this, for which he is so tender as a Minister.

The keystone of the system by which the development of an agricultural country can be first arrested, and finally stopped altogether, is to load landed property with taxes and financial burdens to such an extent that taxation shall overtake the income issuing from the land. When the extent of the margin between expenditure upon land and income derived from it is once accurately ascertained, the Financial Minister who is bent on the ruin of a country has secured his basis of operations. Let him regulate the incidence of his taxation so that the land can neither be let at a profit, nor farmed at a profit, and he will have succeeded in striking the soil with catalepsy. This is just what the Austrians have done in Lombardy. In many districts the soil of this province now yields no profit to its proprietors. The terrible significance of this fact will easily be comprehended by an Englishman accustomed to follow such a conclusion to its remote consequences. On the 22nd of April, 1849, in addition to existing burdens, the Austrians proclaimed the emission of Treasury Bonds (*bons du trésor*) to the extent of 70,000,000 of Austrian livres, secured upon a tax extraordinary imposed by the same warrant or edict, and to be levied on the real property of the Lombard province. On the 29th of September, 1849, a fresh tax of 50 per cent., in addition to existing taxes, was levied on the same species of property. On the 16th of April, 1850, the Governor-General announced the formation of a loan—at first voluntary, but, soon after, made compulsory—of 120,000,000 of Austrian livres. The amount each Italian subject of the Emperor was bound to pay was settled by authority; in default of payment, his property was seized. The 50 per cent. tax, above-mentioned, was maintained until March, 1851, and then reduced to one of 33 per cent.; but this has been maintained throughout as an addition to the ordinary "*impôt foncière*." As a little set-off on the side of severity, in order to lessen the grace of this concession, there was raised another forced loan of 30,000,000 A.L., in order, as the Government said, to buy in Treasury Bonds. The loan was raised, of course; a handful of Treasury Bonds was burnt, in order to keep the promise to the eye. The great bulk of them were simply consolidated. Surely, the troubles of the Lombards are somewhat more than merely "sentimental."

Another small matter should here be mentioned, though with reference to this matter I am not in a position to say that the Italians were worse dealt with than the other subjects of the House of Hapsburgh. On the 16th of June, 1858, there was announced a forced loan of 500,000,000 florins to be levied upon

the whole empire. To the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom was allotted a contribution of 64,571,501 florins, which were duly paid up at the persuasive instigation of Marshal Radetzki. It must, however, be remembered that even if this levy had been equitably apportioned, the unfortunate Lombards had been well nigh reduced to atrophy by recent and copious bleedings of a similar kind.

The result of all this may be seen in any one of the official journals published in Lombardy. The number and quality of the forced sales—that is, sales by authority of the property of defaulters to the tax-gatherers' claims—will afford a very satisfactory index to the condition of the people. And, as I write, I read letters from Lombardy narrating how, to keep soul and body together, the proprietors are compelled to cut down and sell their mulberry-trees—the very means by which, up to this time, they have existed. No wonder that the same letters should speak of the anxiety of all classes to arm and fight against the Austrians.

The sequestration of the property of the emigrants from the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, was a measure so infamous, that at the time it excited the indignation of Europe. The notoriety of the fact precludes the necessity for dwelling upon it. On the 13th of February, 1853, this infamy began, and it was not until the year 1857 that the authorities at Vienna were shamed into withdrawal from this disgraceful policy. Any one who should imagine that the mischief done was repaired by the reversal of the decree, is much mistaken. For three long and miserable years a Special Fiscal Tribunal handled a large portion of the title-deeds of Lombardy, in utter defiance of the principles of justice, or the rule of law, even supposing that the constitution and functions of the Court had not been the foulest violation of both law and justice.

Space would fail me were I to endeavour here to relate the trickery with the coined money to which the Austrians are not ashamed to have recourse in the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom. I pass on to another matter—carefully steering clear of all sentimental troubles—namely, that of the conscription. The Austrian levy in Lombardy is now of 15,600 conscripts, in place of 8,000, at which figure the conscription stood before 1848. The length of service has been raised from eight to ten years. The exemptions, such as those for “only sons” and married men, have been much restricted. The price of a substitute has been fixed by law at 1,500 florins (150*l.*), a sum, of course, far beyond the reach of any Italian peasant. Every year these

wretched creatures are marched off to some distant province of the Empire, whilst their own native land is kept down by the bayonets of those whose native land they in turn are called upon to maintain in affectionate loyalty to the House of Hapsburgh.

I know not if I have said enough to show that the troubles of Lombardy are not of that purely sentimental nature which my Lord Derby would impose upon our credulity as the true view of the case. Englishmen, however, may say, "After all, what is this to us?" Not much, certainly, in the sense that a linen-draper in Hoxton can suffer much inconvenience from the forfeitures, and floggings, and shootings in Lombardy. Thus much, however, at least may be said—if constraint be put upon a negro in the Gold Coast, England sympathises, and rightly so, with that dusky member of the human family. An Italian-Lombard is surely as elevated in the scale of humanity as the most promising negro. Why not give him a turn, now we have set the affairs of our swarthy brethren to rights as well as we can? Again, even if we are so bound by the faith of treaties that we must not interfere between Austria and her wretched subjects in the Slave States of the Empire, surely we are not bound, when treaties are silent, to aid her in extending the same system throughout the whole of the Italian Peninsula. We might inquire, if it be not worth our while to unite with the French Emperor to put an end to these sentimental griefs.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c., &c.

NOTE.—The taxes in Lombardy have been as follows during the last five years:—In 1854, L. A. 87,410,000; in 1855, L. A. 86,720,000; in 1856, L. A. 89,407,000; in 1857, L. A. 93,500,000; in 1858, L. A. 94,800,008. Then add the expenses of collection, amounting to 8 per cent., paid by the communes; about 4,000,000 of L. A. paid for exemption from conscription; the cost of lodging the troops, for which the Government pays two-thirds only of the expense incurred by the communes, &c. The land-tax in the Italian Provinces is close on 38 per cent. of the income; in the rest of the Austrian monarchy it is only 16 per cent.

LETTER IV.

THE TWO SICILIES AND THE MINOR STATES.

MY LORD,—Having thus said a few words about the Pontifical States and Lombardy, I would add a few more about Naples—or rather the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies—and with a suggestion or two as to what has been done in Modena, Parma, and in Tuscany, conclude my brief notice of the sentimental troubles of Italy. There is one reason, perhaps, why I need say but little of Naples, and that is, that the hideous extent of the evil has been formally and officially recognised by the Governments of England and France; and in consequence of the revolting cruelties of King Ferdinand, the two nations which stand at the head of European civilisation have declined to hold any further intercourse with him or his Court.

When the system of Napoleon was broken up in 1815, there were many evil men in Italy who were prepared to work out in practice Metternich's theory of reaction. There was Baratelli in Romagna—there was Bolza in Lombardy; but amongst all these wretches the palm for superior villainy must be conceded to Canosa, the chief of the Neapolitan Police. It is inconceivable that such a man should have been allowed to live on day by day. It was he who organised into regular bands the satellites of Cardinal Ruffo, and of the brigand chief, Fra Diavolo—the hero of the operatic stage, but the vulgar ruffian of real life. From his time until the other day, when the English engineers were tried at Salerno—with such rare intervals of pause as were enforced upon the Court by the temporary successes of the Liberal party—the Government of Naples has been carried on by the police in defiance of the regular laws of the country. The only measure of right and wrong has been the absolute will of the King. We must never forget that Naples has an excellent code of laws, if they were only acted upon, and a tolerable Constitution—(in Sicily there is an old and excellent Constitution)—but the gentlemen who endeavoured to carry it out in practice, with the sanction of the King, are now on their way to the United States, after having endured years of torture and suffering.

The Government of Naples, I say, for the last forty-four years, with the exception of the short intervals named, has been carried on by the Secret Police. Recourse, no doubt, has been had from time to time to the mockery of public trials, but these have only proved an aggravation, not a mitigation of the public distress. There are no murders so foul, no atrocities so hideous, as those which are perpetrated under the form and colour of law. There has been a bloody circuit at Naples for the last forty-four years, and a Jeffreys has never been wanting to a Neapolitan King. From Canosa, downwards, "*uno avulso*"—a wicked man was ever at hand to take the place of infamy at the Sovereign's right hand.

Englishmen may readily imagine to what sufferings from the hands of the police agents the Neapolitans have been exposed, from the following extracts from the *Ministeriali*, which are orders or circulars directed by the King's own orders to the police. These have been collected, and were made public by mistake in the year 1847. The known acts of the police precisely tally with the instructions therein contained. The English reader may find proof of my assertion in the proceedings connected with the trial of Poerio, Settembrini, and their friends and companions in patriotism and misery. If further proof be wanting, it is forthcoming even in the recent trials at Salerno, although it must be remembered that upon that occasion the eyes of Europe were on the Court, and every effort was made to keep the proceedings in something like harmony with justice and law. Poerio's own speech in answer to his villainous accusers is standing evidence that the Neapolitan police have acted in the manner pointed out as imperative upon them by the orders and circulars of which I am about to speak. Would they have dared to have thus acted save on competent authority? What authority could there be for such iniquity save the will of the Sovereign? I am sure that Code and Constitution are silent upon the point.

Here are some of the rules, then, which are prescribed upon the police in their dealings with the King's subjects. A mere public rumour of a man's culpability is a sufficient title for his arrest. There shall be Special Commissioners, both temporary and permanent, for political trials, with one lawyer as assessor, without deliberative voice. The decisions of the Commission are without appeal, nor can they be invalidated through any remonstrance or petition for redress. The sentence of the Military Commission must be immediately executed without the

Royal sanction. The proceedings of these Commissions are summary, and grounded only on *prima facie* evidence. The gendarmerie, the Royal Fusiliers, and other privileged corps, as well as the officers of the ordinary police, may exercise the functions of the Judicial Police. All proceedings connected with the impeachment, the defence, and the trial of the accused, are to be secret. For the proof of the crime, the statements of the officers of the police are to be considered sufficient. They may liberate a convict without sanction, and detain in prison any individual, even though absolved by the judicial authorities. Flogging is one of the disciplinary punishments of the prisoners. It may be employed within the prison walls, for example's sake, in the presence of the other inmates, on the simple authority of the Council of Three, called in the Manual "*la commissione delle Legnate*." The bastinado may be administered by the military, from ten to fifty blows ; it may be extended to a hundred, applied at two different intervals. This punishment may be inflicted not only after condemnation, but as a punishment for ordinary offences, as exciting tumults and noisy meetings in the streets. Espionage is enforced, and neglect of it severely punished. The police officers may penetrate into the prisons, and exact confessions or denunciations from men under trial. Innkeepers and landlords must be dependent on the police, and must give notice of all persons who may lodge with them. All private servants must inscribe their names on the police register, and masters must give notice of the motives of their dismissal.

The foundation thus laid, I will pass on at once to a few remarks on the King's conduct in the affair of Poerio, Settembrini, &c., as illustrative of the above maxims. Let it be remembered that the crime of these men is, that they had acted on the belief that the King's adhesion to the Constitution of February 10, 1848, was not a perjury and a farce.

Here are the words of the King's oath :—

"I, Ferdinand II., by the grace of God, King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, of Jerusalem, &c., Duke of Piacenza, Parma, Castro, &c., Hereditary Grand Prince of Tuscany, &c., &c., promise and swear to God, and upon the Holy Gospels, to profess, and cause to be professed, to defend and preserve, in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Catholic Apostolic Roman religion, the sole religion of the State.

"I promise and swear to observe, and cause to be inviolably observed, the Constitution of this monarchy, promulgated and

irrevocably sanctioned by us (me) on the 10th day of February, 1848, for the same kingdom. I promise and swear to observe, and cause to be observed, all the laws actually in force, and the others which shall be successively sanctioned within the limits of the said Constitution of the kingdom. I promise and swear never to do, nor to attempt, anything against the Constitution and the laws which have been sanctioned, as well for the property as for the persons of our most loving subjects. So may God help me and preserve me in His holy keeping!"

All these professions were lies; there is not one of them from which the King of Naples has not gone back, with the exception of those which refer to the chapter of Roman Catholic bigotry. He has trampled the Constitution under foot. He has persecuted to the death all persons who had any share in its administration. He has violated the laws which protected the persons and the property of his subjects. "So may God help him, and preserve him in his holy keeping!" Poor man! he is now lying at death's door at Bari. There is no wretched prisoner whom he has tortured and kept festering in his gaols, whose fate one would not gladly choose in preference to that of Ferdinand II., King of the Two Sicilies.

But I have not done. The King swore, and swore eagerly to the Constitution. He played the fool, as it were, of the time. When the Constitution was in fashion, there was no Constitutionalist so liberal as he. It was not forced upon him; he fondled it, and embraced it, and thrust it upon his loving subjects in the joy of his heart and the exuberance of his patriotic fervour. Here is his Royal Proclamation of May 24, 1848—mark, published after the 15th of May:—

"Neapolitans,—Being deeply grieved by the horrible catastrophe of the 15th of May, our most lively desire is to mitigate, as far as is humanly possible, its consequences. Our most firm and immutable will is to maintain the Constitution of the 10th of February pure and unstained by any kind of excess, which being the only one compatible with the real and present wants of this part of Italy, will be the holy ark upon which the destinies of our most beloved people and our Crown must repose.

"The Legislative Chambers shall again be immediately convoked; and the wisdom, the firmness, and the prudence that we look for from them will afford us vigorous assistance in all those branches of public affairs which have need of wise and useful reorganisation.

"Resume, then, all your usual occupations; trust, with effusion of mind, to our loyalty, to our religion, and to *our holy and spontaneous oath*, and live in the fullest assurance that the most incessant study of our mind is to abolish, as soon as possible—together with the exceptional and transitory state in which we find ourselves, even as far as may be possible—the memory of the deplorable calamity which has visited us.—FERDINANDO."

I cannot here refrain from adding one little touch as characteristic of the man. When the trial of Poerio and his friends was going on, a Neapolitan advocate, one Saverio Barbarisi, a prisoner himself, made a deposition in favour of the accused. He related how on several occasions he had had interviews with the King, and conversed with him on the subject of the Constitution. Rumours had got about not very favourable to the King's sincerity, and Barbarisi called the Sovereign's attention to the fact. Here is what followed in the deponent's own words:—"His Majesty, full of just indignation, raised his arms as high as he could, kept casting his eyes to heaven and then upon me, and said in the most energetic manner, 'Don Saverio, I have sworn to the Constitution, and I will maintain it; had I not been willing to give it, I would not have given it.'" This was lazzarone-time with the Royal actor.

I trust, my Lord, you will pardon me for bringing this Royal oath and this Royal proclamation before your attention. My wish was to contrast them with the "Manual and Maxims for the Direction of the Police." Which was the system to which this perjured Sovereign finally adhered—the Constitution to which he had sworn, or the police regulations which he had abjured when he swore to govern in accordance with law?

When Mr. Gladstone visited Naples in 1851, according to the best information he could obtain, the number of State prisoners in the Two Sicilies was from 15,000 to 20,000.* The Neapolitan Government tried to diminish this awful total in the eyes of Europe, but signally failed. When I speak of State prisoners—alas! what prisons! Wretched men, who had had the folly to believe in the oath of their Sovereign, were chained two and two—thrust into horrid underground dens—covered with vermin—and exposed to all the horrors of a most lingering death. Poor Settembrini has described the horrid prison of the *Vicaria*, into which he was thrown with other political offenders, but amongst thieves, forgers, and murderers. Some of them had been dragged

through the streets, insulted, beaten, wounded, spat upon, and their hair had been torn out by the satellites of the King. Another had been made to sit in a chair in the midst of a square, surrounded by armed soldiers, who told him they had orders to shoot him. Another had been pinioned for five days, his hands being only loosened when he was to consume his miserable allowance of bread and water. Another was shut up in a dark and loathsome dungeon hewn in the rock, and most execrable to every sense, as in it was a well into which was emptied all the dirt of the other prisoners. It would, however, be needless for me to dilate upon the condition of the Neapolitan prisons. Mr. Gladstone has endowed them, and the Sovereign who permitted their existence, with an immortality of infamy.

The manner in which the conviction of these unfortunate gentlemen was procured—the story of the forged letter nominally addressed by the Marquis Dragonetti from Aquila to Poerio (a contrivance so infamous that even Neapolitan judges could not act upon it)—the false evidence of the Government spy, Jervolino—have been so freely discussed throughout Europe that it is unnecessary for me to dwell upon them here. The King's Judge, Navarro—whose maxim it was, that all persons accused by the King's Government ought to be found guilty—did his work well, and the King found that it was well done. Settembrini—a scholar, a gentleman, a man of refinement, a man as innocent of the crime of which he was accused as your Lordship's self can be—was sentenced to death. But the King's mercy pardoned him; he was clothed in a prison dress, and despatched to the island of San Stefano. There, in a room fourteen or fifteen feet square, he was confined with eight other persons—one of them a notorious assassin, one Cajazzo, who boasted that he had murdered thirty-five persons, some of them in prison. Poerio and fifteen others were confined in a small room; they were chained together two and two, by day and by night, and suffered horrible torment. But enough of this. I would only add a word or two about the method of their recent deportation, and then take leave of this sickening subject.

The King pardoned them at last—that is to say, as they had been iniquitously condemned in the first instance, so they were iniquitously banished from their native land under the cloak of mercy. Four of the prisoners included in the pardon were, to be sure, *dead*; the authorities knew nothing about the matter; but such an occurrence is a trifling one at Naples. What I wanted to say was this, that the illegal deportation of these gentlemen is not

without a precedent in the history of Naples. The Neapolitan Government, within our own recollection, has absolutely *sold* its prisoners—I mean its own subjects, being in the galleys—to a foreign Government; sold them as the King of Dahomey would have sold a cargo of slaves to the American agent of a Cuban house. There was a notable occurrence of this kind in the year 1819. I extract the account of it from Colletta, Book VIII., chap. ii.:—"In December, 1819, a treaty was concluded with Portugal which excited much public scandal and indignation. The penal galleys contained an enormous number of criminals (one of the evils consequent on continual revolutions within the kingdom, and of the corruption of the times). These were a *burden to the finance*, and an anxious charge to the police. An agreement was therefore entered into with Portugal to give up all condemned to the galleys for life, as well as those undergoing temporary punishment, and even those who had already undergone a great part of the penalty for their crimes, to be transported to Rio Janeiro. The Portuguese Commissioners refused to accept the old, the maimed, the sick, and selected the young and vigorous, as fitter for bodily labour. The Government *boasted of their clemency in having liberated those prisoners, though in another hemisphere*; but this act was considered a breach of compact (since such exists even with criminals), and was still more reprehensible on the score of humanity; for while the infamous traffic in slaves had been forbidden throughout the civilised world, men born free were sent from Naples, and *given away to gratify a sordid economy*." That is to say, the prisoners were sold as slaves for the price of their keep.*

Need I here recall the massacres of Messina in 1848, and those of Palermo in 1850, conducted under the auspices of General Filangieri? In January of the year just named, six men were arrested by his orders at the place last named, and sent before a court-martial. There was no proof against them. The court was sitting, when an orderly rode in, and delivered a note to the president. It was from Filangieri, and thus conceived:—"The criminals I send you for trial are to receive the punishment of death, and are to be executed *to-day* in the Piazza della Fiera Vecchia, where the revolutionary outbreak began in 1848, and where the second attempt was made." The

* The Government of Parma, about 1825, sold, in the same manner, two gentlemen, condemned, for political crimes, to work in the salt-mines of the island of Sardinia. The name of one of the gentlemen was Martini.

farce of the trial was going on, and the advocate for the defence was, as we should say, upon his legs, when the escort arrived to conduct the prisoners to execution. He was cut short in his pleading. The wretched creatures were dragged off to execution without even being allowed time to receive the sacraments. I have given but a single instance, as knowing that the details of the misery suffered by individuals touch the human heart more than any general allegation that masses of men were united in a common misfortune. Man's intelligence will not absorb at a throb the agony of millions. But in 1848-50 all the towns of Sicily were red with blood. Nor was this a new thing.

I will not go back for an instance to the year 1821, when the monster Canosa murdered the Sicilians by hundreds for alleged complicity with the Carbonarist societies. Let us take a case nearer our own time in the year 1837. In that year Del Carretto, the worthy successor of Canosa in all infamy and cruelty, had been despatched to Sicily to celebrate the restoration of order in that island. Here is the manner in which he set about his work. I quote from the "Supplement to Colletta," Part II., and need scarcely add that at this time the present Sovereign ruled in Naples :—"Order had been restored in Sicily, but he immediately instituted courts-martial to try the offenders. A thousand of the Sicilians were summarily sentenced to death, and more than a hundred executed. The leaders had escaped, or fallen in conflict, but Del Carretto hoped, by the number of his victims, to strike terror, prove the magnitude of the revolt to Europe, and justify the subsequent acts of the Government, which had been already decided on. Such was the haste with which the executions were conducted, that, in one instance, *there was found one too many among the dead*. A lad of fourteen perished, besides many priests and women, while, to add to the horror of the scene, a band of music was ordered to play during the executions. Del Carretto passed his time in feasting and dances, to which *he invited the wives and daughters* of those who had fled or been compromised." But enough of this, I say again. I fear I have detained your Lordship too long in King Ferdinand's shambles.

The internal history of Naples during the present century would appear to be briefly as follows :—The re-actionary party, after the great outbreak in France, were driven from the mainland to Sicily, and there remained till 1815. They contrived, however, to keep their faction alive on the *terra firma* during this

period, through the instrumentality of Ruffo and other agents of the sort. When the monarchy was restored in 1815, they were kept quiet for a time. The members of the Congress of Vienna had recommended clemency as the better system. After 1820, however, things were changed. Under the shadow of the Austrian banners, Ferdinand I. and Francis I., during his brief reign, were able to take their own course, and what a course! Then came the French Revolution of 1830, and the accession of the present King. There was breathing-time for a few months. From 1833 to 1847 Ferdinand II. threw off the mask, and I think I have given a few illustrations of his ideas of government. In 1848 the tyrant became once more the crouching, cajoling, false lazzarone of his own capital; and from the 15th of May in that year, when he got up an *émeute* in the streets of Naples, and turned his guns and his drunken soldiers upon the people, until now, he has flogged, imprisoned, tortured, and murdered his wretched subjects in his own way. Between 1833 and 1847 there were no less than seven attempts at revolution, all put down—drowned in blood. From 1815 to 1858, the Neapolitan people, for all practical purposes, may be said to have been living under the dominion of arbitrary power, supported by military force—the most effective, perhaps the only reliable, part of that force being the Austrian and Swiss regiments. Police agents and police spies have been the real administrators of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies—the armed force, when wanted to support them, was there.

We read of cruelties, such as those which I have recited, in the story of the great French Revolution during the Reign of Terror. The incidents of that time have affixed a stigma upon the French name from which it has not, even now, recovered in the opinion of the world. But we think of the Septembrists, and Marat, and Robespierre, and the Abbaye, and the *noyades* at Nantes, and the wholesale *fusillades* at Lyons, and the frenzied "*Ça ira*" dances, as of the hideous legends of another time with which this generation has no concern. But such things have been done in our time, and in towns practically nearer to London than were Paris, or Lyons, or Nantes, in 1791-92-93, when we take account of the increased facilities of communication. Nobody says a word about the massacres of Naples, and Messina, and Palermo; or, if some one should start up—as did Mr. Gladstone, to his immortal honour—to denounce them, why 'tis a nine days' wonder. A few articles are written in newspapers—a few more in our reviews. The subject is mentioned

at dinner-parties between the last gossip about the Academy and the state of the odds upon the favourite for the Derby. Practical England turns aside to amend her law of copyholds, or establishes committees to supply the negroes of the Gold Coast with Wenham Lake ice and effervescing lemonade !

But ere I bring this Letter to a conclusion I must say a very few words about two other Italian States, Tuscany and Modena, and they shall be very few indeed. It must be admitted that Tuscany, including, of course, the little Duchy of Lucca, is that part of Italy in which not only a foreigner but an Italian can draw the freest breath ; and when we mark what the behaviour of other Italian princes has been, it is better for the sake of their subjects that they should be as the reigning Grand Duke of Tuscany. But even with regard to him it must not be forgotten that he has given a signal example of ingratitude to the Tuscan people. He fled the country in 1848. His own Tuscans brought him back, not as a captive, but as their ruler. It was *Varennnes* over again, but with a loyal people, and an easy throne at the end of the return drive, not the Temple and the scaffold. His own people, I say, with arms in their hands, and with full power to accept him or expel him, brought him back, and took him as their Sovereign once more. How was all this affection, all this loyalty repaid ? Leopold, at the first opportunity, tore the Constitution to rags, and abolished it by a *motu proprio* on the 6th of May, 1851, at the instigation of Austria ; he filled his towns and provinces with Austrian soldiers, and turned the Grand Duchy into a mere outlying district of the Austrian dominions.

I have reserved the case of the Duke of Modena for last mention. I do not speak of the present Duke, but of Francis IV., that very archetype and ideal of a modern Italian ruler. He was the son of an Austrian Archduke, who had married the daughter and heiress of the House of Este. Even in Italy, at a time when severe and oppressive government was the rule, this man was noted for his oppression and severity.

I could scarcely make clear to any one who had not a knowledge of the Italian character the difference between Francis of Modena, who is gone to his account, and Ferdinand of Naples, who is now at Bari. As one is dead and the other living, there is some confusion of tenses in speaking about these two Sovereigns in one phrase ; but I prefer the past tense, as the most agreeable in this case to the general reader. Francis of Modena, then, and Ferdinand of Naples were both faithless

and treacherous to the highest degree. A feeble ray of truth and honour had never penetrated into either of their breasts. They were both very fond of soldiers and military fiddle-faddle, yet both were pre-eminent cowards. Francis took to his heels before his insurgent subjects in 1831, and Ferdinand fled like a scared hare before General Garibaldi at Palestrina in 1848. Both employed that atrocious villain, Canosa, as a confidential agent. Both delighted in human misery—both had huge notions of the dignity of the Sovereign. Both were, intellectually and morally, in strict descent from Judas; the favourite *modus operandi* of each being to kiss and to betray. Now for the shades of difference in their character. The *Policinello* element, which enters so largely into Ferdinand's character, was wanting in Francis. Ferdinand would, at any given moment of his career, have put on a red cap and danced a Tarantella on the Chiaja in honour of liberty: when the dance was over, and the dancers were yet rejoicing with him, he would have slipped aside, and have swept them from the earth with whiffs of grape. Francis could not rise to such a jovial height of rollicking hypocrisy; he would have smiled upon you blandly, squeezed your hand, and consigned you to the scaffold; the transition from the smile to the sneer being so imperceptible that you could scarcely have traced the change ere the rope was round your throat, and the Duke had retired to prayers. Both Francis and Ferdinand were superstitious; but the palm of bigotry must be conceded to Ferdinand—I almost think he believes in St. Januarius' blood. There was, however, one striking point of difference between them. Francis would dally with the Liberals for his own ambitious purposes, as he did in 1831; he seems to have thought that revolutionary France might commence another armed propagandism in the Liberal sense, and he might obtain the crown of Italy in the confusion. At any rate, in 1831, he made overtures to the Liberal leaders—to Ciro Menotti, and others. This point has never been explained: was he faithless to Austria?—was he faithless to the Liberals? My own opinion is, that he was faithless to both, and that, having commenced operations with the intention of betraying Austria, he fell back in her arms, when he found that Louis Philippe, whom he never recognised, had not the smallest idea of placing himself at the head of a Liberal Propagandism. Having found out his mistake, he then betrayed the Liberals, whose confidence he had invited. Such is my own reading of the matter; but there are not wanting those who take the more favourable view

of the case, and assert that he was a mere spy of Austria throughout.

In 1821, this Francis of Modena, of whom I am speaking, displayed a fine burst of the true St. Bartholomew spirit in hunting down the Carbonari. He had an old fortress called Rubiera, in which he used to proceed to the examination of his prisoners—his form of procedure being similar to that adopted by Baron Front de Bœuf *in re Isaac of York*, when the defendant was on the gridiron and the gridiron unpleasantly hot. He used to keep three judges, or rather executioners, at work in this place; and his great amusement was to step up to the Rubiera, and converse with these gentlemen on *the occurrences of the day*—as we go down to a club. Just before setting off for the Congress of Verona, in order to have his mind clear for diplomatic work, he disposed at this place of forty-three wretched creatures at a batch—his religious feeling revolted at the idea of a priest being hanged, and one of them, Andreoli, escaped the halter, being beheaded. But it was after he had run away from his dominions, and been restored by the Austrians in 1831, that the more beautiful points of his character came out in fine relief. I cannot pretend to set forth at length the hangings and shootings of this Ducal benefactor to his species; but I can find space to quote the edict under which he conducted his operations. I assure you, my Lord, in all sincerity and with all respect, that I am not presuming to jest with you. I am speaking of a State paper published at Modena on the 18th of April, 1832, in the name and under the authority of the Duke. Here is an extract from it:—"As to the future, seeing that the fathers of past revolutions and of present disorders, prepared long ago impunity for political crimes, beginning, under the hypocritical cloak of a deceitful philanthropy, to lighten the punishments, and *submitting the gravest crimes to the same long proceedings and proofs which are required for even the smallest crimes*; seeing also that the Liberals not only ask, but *insist on a regular procedure under the specious name of justice*; and well foreseeing that either from want of proofs, or from want of witnesses, or from their not agreeing in their evidence, or because the crime was not completed, or because the criminal intention is not proved, they will either be acquitted or slightly punished;" seeing, and foreseeing all these grave inconveniences, *after mature consideration*, the Duke enacts that *his officers "shall put to death without trial of any sort all persons they have found in the act of rebellion,*

ET CETERA !!!” The Duke of Modena, like a fair lady, daintily insinuates his mind in a postscript. This was not all : no trial under the head of “rebellion, *et cetera*,” was to take place, save before a military commission appointed by the Duke *ad hoc*. He himself was to discharge in person the functions of the grand jury or the committing magistrate—an immense consolation to his subjects. The Duke winds up with a final provision, which I will transcribe, and then have done with its author, of whom your Lordship must, by this time, be nearly as weary as were his subjects during his most abominable life :—“If the case should happen, that by secret denunciation, and witnesses above exception, to whom the promise is given not to divulge their names to the tribunals, still less to confront them with the accused, the Sovereign was to acquire conscientiously a moral certainty of the crime, then rather than betray the secret, or compromise those who trusting to us have made, or may make, useful revelations, we shall be satisfied with inflicting, as measures of police, an extraordinary punishment below the ordinary one (to which a person is subject after a trial), always accompanied by banishment.” It sounds, my Lord, like a bad joke ; but it is a fact, that our fellow-creatures were proceeded against under the power of this Ducal edict. The present Duke is worthy of his sire. He is the creature, the tool, the slave, the very utensil of Austria—active and industrious in his subserviency. He lately made a tour of the Italian Courts, to form an Austrian League ; and more recently he has concluded a Commercial Treaty with Austria, which is a violation of both his own and the Emperor’s engagements with Piedmont. I think I have said enough to show what the system of government pursued by the Italian Princes, *when backed by Austria*, has been. I will now pass on to other matters.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c., &c.

LETTER V.

THE TREATY OF VIENNA.

MY LORD,—I have now to discuss the argument founded upon the faith of treaties. I regret that Lord Derby and his friends should have put this in the van, for I am very sure that if this issue is to be raised we shall very soon drift into a European war.

To public writers and mere Parliamentary orators, the Treaty of Vienna is a rhetorical expression; it turns a sentence, but is rarely examined; it is spoken of as the most familiar thing in the world, when, in truth, it is the least known. That your Lordship understands and appreciate it, I know, because the whole correspondence of your Government in 1847-8-9, as to Italy, is animated by the soundest views of its obligations.

Now, the Treaty of Vienna did many bad, unjust, wicked, and detestable things; but it was not so stupidly or foolishly framed as to guarantee Lombardo-Venetia to Austria. The old warriors and statesmen, the wily diplomatists, and the clever secretaries engaged in it, knew the value of language as well as any men; they were choice and precise in their selection of words, because their views and objects were clear and well defined. You will find in it all degrees and kinds of obligations; but you will discover only one guarantee of territory; and that territory was not Lombardo-Venetia. It was not even the banks of the Rhine, about which Germany every now and then throws herself into such grotesque and unnecessary hysterics. By the 15th Article the poor King of Saxony was compelled to cede part of his monarchy to Prussia, and that cession was, by Article 17, placed under the collective guarantee of Europe. There, however, such obligations terminated.

Poland was united to Russia; Cracow was declared to be "for ever independent, free, and neutral;" Genoa was annexed to Piedmont; two-thirds of Europe were re-arranged and re-settled in one way or other. But of all the expressions of the treaty, the weakest and least forcible was that used as to Lombardo-Venetia. It was, in truth, a delicate subject; the Italians had not been consulted; they had no representatives at the Con-

gress; the kingdom of Italy had flourished and prospered under a national administration; Waterloo had not yet been fought. So all the Great Powers did at Vienna was, by Article 103, to "recognise" certain parts of Italy as Austrian, under certain treaties, which it enumerated and partially revived. Austria had previously seized on and occupied them; it was no time to argue and discuss with what right, or on what authority; the fact was accepted as a fact, and "recognised." Nothing more, my Lord. So long, therefore, as the fact of occupation remains, let it be recognised as we recognise other facts—the existence, for example, of the Devil himself. But to raise this bare recognition to the importance and duty of an obligation, is to alter, and not to adhere to, the Treaty of Vienna.

Your Lordship's Cabinet, I know, seriously considered this point in 1848, and so read the Treaty of Vienna. But it is much to be feared that Lord Derby and his colleagues in talking so magniloquently of the treaty, desire to create an impression that it involves England in a task which the treaty never dreamt of; and it will be for your Lordship to instruct the country of our true position in the matter.

The independence of Belgium we have guaranteed, the integrity of Turkey we have pledged our faith to; but we are under no bonds to preserve Lombardo-Venetia to Austria. King Leopold and the Sultan can, when assailed, claim our moral and material assistance. Not so the Kaiser. As long as he can retain Lombardy, we bow to the misfortune; when he can't, we may lawfully rejoice, without disturbing in their graves the authors of the Treaty of Vienna.

But, my Lord, I see with amazement and indignation that both Austria and Prussia, in their recent circular despatches to the small German States on the Italian question, speak of references to the Germanic Confederation. What has the Germanic Confederation to do with Italy? Oh, my Lord, what misery, wretchedness, and injustice Germany has in past centuries inflicted on Italy! It had then, however, the excuse of that old German Empire which so long teased, tormented, cursed, and depopulated Europe by the wrongs it perpetrated. But that mischief to mankind was swept away half a century ago. Are we now to permit the Germanic Confederation to rise in its place? That Confederation was the creation of the Treaty of Vienna; it exists only under the provisions of that treaty; it is limited and confined by the language and terms of the treaty; out of its stipulations the Confederation has neither rights nor

duties. Now, by Article 54, the objects of the Confederation are declared to be the internal and external security of Germany. Is Italy, then, part of Germany? Or, who talks of attacking Germany from without? And what danger within except from her own bad Princes?

It is bad enough to see the smaller Princes of Germany using their Diet of Frankfort to put down Constitutional liberty and Parliamentary government in Hanover and Luxembourg, as we have recently seen. But, for the greater States of Germany to talk of using it to perpetuate the misery of Italy, contemplates such a disregard of the Treaty of Vienna as the world has not yet witnessed.

The King of Holland is, your Lordship knows, a member of the Germanic Confederation as Duke of Luxembourg; and the King of Denmark's representative has a seat and vote in the Diet for the Duchy of Holstein. But if the brave Belgians crossed the Scheldt, would Holland have a right to call the Confederation to its defence; or if Sweden one fine day annexed the Danish Isles, and united Scandinavia, would Denmark be entitled to summon the Diet to its assistance? Why, then, this reference of Italy to the German Confederation?

I appeal to you, my Lord. Is England really bound to support the arrangement of the Treaty of Vienna by force of arms? We recognised certain territorial and other stipulations, and agreed for ourselves to respect them. We never said, and we were never understood to say, that if any provision of the Treaty of Vienna was infringed by any one party to the treaty to the prejudice of any other party, that we would step in and enforce obedience to the compact of 1815. We may respect this compact ourselves, we may hold that it is for the interests of Europe that its provisions shall be maintained, unless they are changed or modified by the same authority which first gave them force, but nothing more.

The course of events has hurried us away to the midst of quibbles fitter for lawyers than statesmen. The one great, overwhelming, and paramount danger against which the Treaty of Vienna was intended to guard, was the European autocracy of Napoleon Bonaparte. Anathema maranatha! away with him! let his place be desolate, and let salt be sown where he has trod. Such was the language and the meaning of the Viennese negotiators. They wanted to eradicate Napoleon and his descendants and representatives altogether from the European system. Well, then, if we were now to agree upon that

which the veriest stickler for diplomatic propriety would admit was a perfect and technical solution of the question, and call a European Congress together to re-settle the affairs of Italy, the Sovereign who would represent France would be Louis Napoleon—the nephew of the Emperor whom the Viennese negotiators had put to the ban of mankind; and where would be the place of the King of the Belgians at the Council Board of the nations, as that place was settled by the Treaty of Vienna?

After the events of 1831, when the Treaty of Vienna might be said to be hot in our mouths, it was resolved that, treaty or no treaty, Holland must be informed that she could no longer retain Belgium, and that upon her refusal Belgium would be torn from her by force. What Power was it which was the chief and most efficient actor in that measure of general police? I answer, emphatically, England. The French artillery, which played upon the Antwerp citadel, made more noise in the world; but it was the consciousness that England had closed the seas against him which mainly induced the Netherlands King to acquiesce in his defeat, and in the disruption of the territory which had been assigned to him by the Treaty of Vienna. Of course, the resistance which might be opposed by so powerful and so military a nation as Austria would be one of the items of consideration, as also the general exigency of the case for the public welfare; but at least here is a practical example of how the treaty can be dealt with on suitable occasions.

Need I refer again to that flagrant instance of Cracow, in which the three great military nations beyond the Rhine treated the provisions of the Treaty of Vienna, and the earnest and long-continued remonstrances of England, with contempt and derision. Russia, Prussia, and Austria, on the day when they seized by violence upon that territory, shut themselves out for ever after from all appeal to the Treaty of Vienna as a rule of European right.

All the Great Powers of Europe have, when it suited their purpose, disregarded this settlement of 1815. After the instances I have adduced, will any one deny the truth of this proposition? It may be a matter of general convenience to refer to the Treaty of Vienna; but I am sure, if repeated and vital infringements of its provisions can at all detract from the value of a compact, there can be little virtue left in this Treaty of Vienna. As to the exact limits within which such an oft-violated agreement is entitled to our reverence, I profess that

my own eye is not keen enough, nor of sufficient microscopic power, to define them with nicety and accuracy. I find myself in presence of an old parchment which every one of the great Powers appears to have perforated exactly at its own pleasure. All the comfort we can fairly derive from it is, that it was an agreement suited to the time; and that if any serious European complications should arise, we had better make another agreement suited to our time. We had much better, in short, settle our quarrels by peaceful negotiation than by war. You cannot, in very truth, expect that any settlement of this kind should be of an everlasting nature, although you cannot establish any Statute of Limitations within which treaties shall be binding, and not beyond. I will not appeal to so eminent a statesman as your Lordship to indorse the truth of such a proposition, but I would ask any Englishman of reasonable intelligence to decide whether our security, and the certainty we possess that no other nation will injure us, or attack us, or violate any agreement with which we as a nation are concerned, does not depend, under the Divine blessing, upon our national wealth, strength, and intelligence, upon the valour of our fleets and armies, and not upon the Treaty of Vienna, or any other compact of the kind. Why cheat ourselves with delusions, or rely upon such vain ideas as that the terms of any compact will bind ambitious princes, or restrain the will of tyrants? I do not know if I am singular in my opinion; but I infinitely prefer as a security for our English firesides the Armstrong gun to the Treaty of Vienna.

But now let us take the case of the Emperor of Austria, who appeals to the provisions of the Treaty of Vienna as a guarantee for his Italian dominions. How has he himself, I will not say out of Italy, but in Italy, respected the terms or spirit of the treaty which he now invokes? It never could have been intended by the negotiators at the Congress that the Italian Peninsula was to be converted into an Austrian possession, yet all the efforts of Austria have been directed to this end since the year 1815. Agreements have been made with the various Italian princes binding them to the Austrian system. Austria has promised them aid against their subjects, and too faithfully have these promises at least been kept. Austria has, therefore, violated the letter of the Treaty of Vienna in her dealings with the Italians, as her whole conduct in Italy, for the last forty-four years, has been one long violation of its spirit.

I wonder how Europe would take it at the present moment if Victor Emmanuel and France were to do, without further

notice, what the Pope and Austria, the King of Naples and Austria, the Grand-Duke of Tuscany and Austria, the Duke of Modena and Austria, the Duke of Parma and Austria, have done as often as they pleased, from 1815 down to our own time. I suppose, if it be right for the Pope to call in the assistance of foreigners, it cannot be very wrong for the King of Sardinia to call in the assistance of foreigners. Let us forget all coquetties of language, and maintain corresponding terms, as though we were dealing with an algebraic equation. The King of Sardinia needs foreign protection against foreigners—that is to say, Austrians—or he thinks so. The Pope of Rome, the King of Naples, and *tutti quanti*, need foreign protection against their own subjects, or they think so. The King of Sardinia calls in France; the Pope, the King of Naples, &c., call in Austria. How can that which is perfectly right in all these gentlemen be so very monstrous and wrong in the other? It seems to me that when the Treaty of Vienna gave Lombardy and Venice to Austria, it did not mean to give the whole of Italy, nor even the right to occupy the whole of Italy with Austrian troops at Austrian pleasure.

But I have not yet done with this discussion about foreign troops; and I require that, in strict argument, it should be granted that whilst France confines herself to doing that which Austria has done throughout, she should not be molested. Are not, I say, the Hungarians and Croats in the service of Austria foreign troops? and have they not been lent to Naples, to Rome, to Tuscany, to Modena? Austria, indeed, seems attached to the system; for without the Italian boundaries, after the events of 1848, she imported foreigners—I mean a Russian army—into Hungary, and, by their assistance, rescued that province of her Empire from the curse of liberty. I will now pass to some particulars connected with the Austrian policy in Italy and the Treaty of Vienna.

By the Treaty of Vienna, Piacenza belongs to the Duchy of Parma. Piacenza had a fortified citadel in which, by a treaty supplementary to that of Vienna, a right of garrison was given to Austria. The city, I say, belongs to the Duchy of Parma by the same treaty; but it was necessary for the Austrians, in order to get the place perfectly into their power, to get possession of the city walls. I should have said that Piedmont has a rever-
sionary right in Piacenza under certain conditions, and as the place is close upon the Piedmontese frontier, it is of vital importance to that country that it should not be held too tightly in the

grasp of Austria. The Austrians bought the walls of Piacenza from the mayor of the city, as belonging to the city, and not to the State. The Sovereign, of course, might have prevented the execution of such a contract, but the Sovereign at the time was Marie Louise, the widow of Napoleon, the daughter of the purchaser, Francis, the then Emperor of Austria. Had she sold the walls, a disturbance might have been made about it, but this was simply the case of a transfer of private property from hand to hand. When the Austrians got possession of the walls, of course they could do what they liked with their new purchase. They fortified them according to all the rules of good military engineering, and converted the whole city into a fortress. To protect these fortified walls, outworks were necessary. The Austrians quickly took possession of such spots outside the walls of Piacenza as might be suitable for their purpose, and thereupon erected large forts. Piacenza at the present moment is, in their hands, a first-class fortress, full of troops, munitions, guns—a standing menace and a real danger to Piedmont. I will now give the provisions of the Supplementary Treaty to that of Vienna which Austria has thus distinctly violated. It was made in Paris in 1817, and *England was a party to it*. It was agreed (Article 5) that although the limits of the Austrian dominions and those of the Duchies of Parma and Piacenza were by the Treaty of Vienna fixed at the Po, which ran between them, yet as “*la forteresse de Plaisance*” was important to Austria, “*S.M.I.R. Apostolique, elle conservera dans cette ville jusqu’ à l’époque des reversions, après l’extinction de la Branche Espagnole des Bourbons, le droit de garnison pur et simple . . . et sa force en temps de paix, sera déterminée à l’amiable entre les hautes parties intéressées, en prenant toutefois pour règle le plus grand soulagement des habitants.*” When the agreement was signed the citadel of Piacenza only was a fortress. Is it now according to the treaties? Has Piedmont no right to call on those who signed that treaty to see it observed by Austria?

I think, my Lord, it would not be difficult to show that the whole aspect of Italy is in flagrant contradiction to the Treaty of Vienna. Of course I am aware that by heaping up minor instances of breach on the side of Austria I should not make my case stronger, for my true argument is, that from the Po down to Reggio, Italy has been converted into an Austrian province. Indeed, I have often thought when wandering about amongst the Italian towns, and stumbling upon Austrian sentries

wherever I went, that perhaps it would have been better for Italy if the negotiators at Vienna, in 1815, had handed her over bodily to Austria. In that case it might have been that the Italian would have killed the German element in the system of government. Italy, with its 26,000,000 of inhabitants, might then have become the chief instead of the servant—the mistress instead of the slave.

But whilst I am upon breaches of the Treaty of Vienna, I see in Article 101 that it is agreed that Lucca shall be a Duchy, "*et conservera une forme de Gouvernement basée sur les principes de celle qu'elle avait reçue en 1805.*" The Article by which this limited form of Government was settled is to be found in Martens, and it is dated the 24th of June, 1805. No attention, however, is paid to this Article; the Duchy is now governed despotically under the Grand Duke of Tuscany. As one turns over the Articles of this famous Treaty relative to Italy, he can only wonder how few even of the minor details have been observed.

It falls in naturally with this division of my subject that I should observe that the most ridiculous mis-statements have lately found currency in the columns of the English press as to the duration of Austrian rule in Italy. The writers appear to have learnt their old school-lessons about Frederick Barbarossa and the Guelphs and Ghibellines amiss. They have mistaken one thing for another—a shadowy feudal authority of the Empire for actual *bonâ fide* possession by Austria. Your Lordship, I am sure, will bear me out for the truth of my statement, when I boldly assert that, before the French invasion of 1796, the Austrians were not possessors of a foot of land in Italy beyond what I am about to name. They had the Duchy of Milan—that had been Austrian, mostly Spanish-Austrian, for about three hundred years—and not without interruption. They had, besides, the Duchy of Mantua—of which the House of Gonzaga had been robbed by the Empire about fifty years before 1796. Piedmont, of course, never was Austrian. One just remembers to have read of a war waged with the object of excluding the House of Austria from the throne of the Two Sicilies. The family which, according to the settlement at Utrecht, was, unfortunately for the Two Sicilies, placed over them with sovereign powers, was the rival and enemy of the Hapsburgs. The Republics of Genoa, Lucca, Venice were not Austrian. The Pope was not Austrian, as he is now. Parma and Piacenza were confirmed to a Bourbon at the peace of Aix-

la-Chapelle in 1748. No Austrian was ever there. When Francis III. of Este married an Austrian Archduchess, it was agreed that on the failure of issue the Duchies of Modena and Reggio should go to an Archduke, as an independent Sovereignty, and never be united to Austrian Lombardy. The same was done for Tuscany. I say that all the arrangements made, down to the Congress of Vienna, with respect to Italy, were made to prevent it from becoming Austrian. And now, in the year 1859, the faith of the Treaty of Vienna is invoked to allow Austria to be paramount in Italy.

I think, my Lord, it will be found that it comes to this, that well nigh every act of Austria in Italy since 1815 has been a series of disregards of that treaty; and on those it is that Austria founds her pretensions. Why, my Lord, when the Austrian General evacuated the States of the Church in 1816, he announced in a proclamation, to the infinite disgust of Pius VII. and Consalvi, that Austria gave, as if belonging to Austria—not gave *back*—the Legations to the Pope. Austria must settle her affairs in Ferrara on a much more modest footing than heretofore, abandon Piacenza (save the citadel), evacuate the Legations, give up her secret treaties with the Italian States, and do a few more odd things besides, if she would confine her Italian rule within the limits pointed out by the Treaty of Vienna.

As the fashion is now to stand up for the observance of treaties, I think it right, my Lord, to give you the history of an instance of good faith which claims some attention from England.

I need not say that Sicily had an old Constitution, as old as the English one; old-fashioned and substantially aristocratic. In 1812, English influence being paramount in that island, a reform of this old Constitution was determined on, with the view of assimilating as much as possible the institutions of Sicily to those of England, whose assistance was asked for that purpose? “England could not be insensible to the appeal which was made to her” (I quote from a memorandum of Sir W. A’Court, afterwards Lord Heytesbury, then English Minister at Palermo. The memorandum is of the 20th of October, 1814, and was laid before the House of Commons by command of Her Majesty on the 4th May, 1849, with other documents, which I will quote), . . . “and became the protectress and supporter of alterations founded upon principles so just in themselves, and so creditable to those from whom they had originally emanated.” But, as that Minister observes in the same memorandum, the work was not completed at the time he was

writing, and he declared that "England would willingly lend that aid and support which it may be in her power to afford in any temperate and prudent modification of the Government. She exacts only as a condition of this assistance that it be done by the Parliament itself; that it be accomplished in a legal and constitutional manner."

Murat being driven from the throne of Naples, the old Bourbon King came over from Sicily in May, 1815, and on the 12th of June following he entered into that famous secret agreement with Austria that he would not introduce, in the Two Sicilies, such a form of government as would be irreconcilable with the principle adopted by Austria in the internal government of her Italian provinces.

Protected by the Austrians, the King then went further on the road to despotism in Sicily. On the 6th of August, 1816, an edict was promulgated ordering that taxes should be levied, though not voted by Parliament (which had never been called together since 1815); it was also ordered that any one who dared to question the legality of such an edict should be arrested and imprisoned. The Commons petitioned the Viceroy to call Parliament together. As an example to others, Cosimo Galasso, who had advised the Commune of Misilmeri to petition, was thrown into prison, where he was kept for the space of two years; the more willingly as he was a partisan of England, and, as such, had been taken under her special protection, as appears from the following words, taken from the memorandum of the 20th of October, 1814, already quoted:—"England," says the English Minister, "has an undoubted right to insist that no person shall suffer either in his person or his property for the part he may have taken in the establishment and support of the Constitution; and the perfect security of these individuals must be considered as a *sine qua non* of the continuance of the British alliance and protection."

The Congress of Vienna, whether by chance or deliberately, wishing to secure the possession of both the Neapolitan and Sicilian kingdoms to Ferdinand, acknowledged him as *King of the Two Sicilies*; and from this the King argued that a new kingdom had been established, and instead of continuing to be Ferdinand IV. of Sicily, he determined to be Ferdinand I. of the Two Sicilies. This apparent trivial change rendered it necessary that uniform laws—so it was said—and institutions should be devised for both countries. Now, in that case, any Constitution in Sicily was incompatible with the

new Treaty with Austria, and it was necessary to annihilate the old one. England was committed by the memorandum of the 20th October, 1814, to a Constitution of some sort. Lord Castlereagh came to the rescue of the two Allies, Austria and Sicily. He wrote, therefore, to the inevitable Sir W. A'Court on the 6th of September, 1816, a despatch beginning thus:—"The necessity which is felt by the King of Naples, and which has been equally recognised by the Parliament of Sicily, of effectuating certain changes in the Constitution of that country" (meaning, of course, not Naples, but Sicily), "has been submitted to the Prince Regent." As a matter of fact, the Parliament of Sicily had never met since the King of that country had become King of Naples. How, then, the Parliament could have equally recognised what was felt by the King of Naples, passes comprehension. Lord Castlereagh then proceeds to state that the Prince Regent must decline any interference with the affairs of an independent and sovereign State, except in the case that any of those who had acted with the British authorities in Sicily should be exposed to unkindness or persecution on account of such conduct; or "if he had the mortification to observe any attempt made to reduce the privileges of the Sicilian nation in such a degree as might expose the British Government to the reproach of having contributed to a change of system in Sicily which had, in the end, impaired the freedom and happiness of its inhabitants, as compared with what they formerly enjoyed." From this it appears that England consented that to a certain degree the privileges of the Sicilians should be reduced, and their constitution altered, but not by Parliament only, as was plainly set forth in the memorandum of the 20th of October, 1814.

Accordingly, on the 30th of October, 1816 (as appears from a despatch of Sir W. A'Court to Lord Castlereagh, dated 5th of November, 1816), a meeting of the whole Cabinet of his Sicilian Majesty was held, at which the English Minister assisted, when he made "a formal declaration of the views and feelings of the British Government with respect to Sicily, according to the instructions contained in the despatch of the 6th of September." He adds, on his own authority, the story which had no foundation whatever, that the two Houses "have themselves called upon the Crown to nominate a Commission for deliberating on the proposed alterations" of the Sicilian Constitution. This is simply untrue (*Palmieri Storia Costituz. della Sicilia*, pp. 268 and 311); and as there had been no Parliament called together

since the one dissolved in May, 1815, it is clear that the story is groundless.

Sir W. A'Court would not give a copy of this declaration to the Sicilian Ministers, but he allowed his words to be recorded, and then consented, as a private individual, and "setting aside his public character," to hear the details of the projected changes; although it passes all comprehension how he could remain as a private individual at a Cabinet Council which he entered as an English Minister. He takes great merit to himself, especially, for having insisted that the revenue fixed by the Sicilian Parliament at 1,847,687 ounces (about 24,000,000 fr.) in 1813, should never be increased without the approbation of Parliament. The futility of such a stipulation in a country without any public accounts, and without any means of forcing the King to call together a Parliament, is evident. In point of fact, the revenue in 1847 was more than 26,200,000 fr.; it is higher now. But the coolness with which the English Minister was humbugged (I can hardly suppose he knew the cheat practised) is one of the most impudent that ever was known. The revenue in 1813 was, no doubt, 1,847,687 ounces; but the taxes amounted only to 1,287,687 ounces; the revenue being increased by 560,000 ounces (the English subsidy), which, of course, had ceased in 1816. (Papers laid before both Houses of Parliament on the 4th of May, 1849. App., pages 42 and 46.) The very English Minister, who had paid the subsidy from England, was entrapped into considering it a tax on the Sicilians, to whose exchequer it had been paid. There is, probably, no parallel to this diplomatic blunder.*

Now, then, will the sticklers for the observance of treaties deny that the freedom and happiness of the Sicilians is impaired? Will they deny that, according to the clear promises of 1816, England is bound to interfere? And to whom is it owing that Sicily's freedom and her liberties are destroyed? Had we not better show our respect for our own pledged faith as to Sicily, than preach to Piedmont the observance of treaties?

But let us return to the Treaty of Vienna. I have shown, or endeavoured to show, that this Treaty of Vienna,

* There were two sets of papers laid—one before the House of Commons, the other before both Houses—both on the 4th of May, 1849. The former is a sort of supplement to the latter. The Duke of Wellington, who contended that England had the right and duty to interfere, and to force the King of Naples to observe the agreement about Sicily, was the man who, to his great honour, insisted that the A'Court Correspondence should be produced.

about which so much has been said, has been treated on all sides for the last forty years as a document of no great authority. All the fine writing and the lofty moral sentiments are, I know, on the side of keeping treaties inviolate; but the facts unfortunately run the other way. I do not suppose that the provisions of this old treaty count for anything in the mind of any one of the Princes or Statesmen who are now engaged in dealing with the Italian question. What have we to gain in this world of stern and awful realities by placing our reliance on a delusion?

I have shown, moreover, that the Treaty of Vienna has been disregarded for the last forty years, and is disregarded daily by Austria in Italy. In point of fact, her Italian preponderance rests on a disregard of that treaty; and your Lordship may be very sure that if we accept the strict construction of the treaty, and determine to unite with other great Powers in imposing it upon the parties to this dispute, it means war. Austria will inscribe upon her banner, "Down with the treaty," and fight to the death. We may then, perhaps, have substituted a *casus belli*, which will satisfy tender consciences, for one on which a casuist might entertain a doubt.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c., &c.

LETTER VI.

DIPLOMACY IN ITALY.

MY LORD,—I do not feel that it is necessary to dilate at any great length upon the diplomatic division of the subject, as distinct from the discussion of the formal treaty. There have been two or three solemn occasions upon which the diplomatists of the great Powers have left upon record an expression of their opinion with regard to Italian affairs. Mention of these being made, it will be sufficient for my purpose to assert that, in the intervals between these more important declarations, the views of the leading statesmen of Europe have remained unchanged.

So far back as 1832 I find that Count Lutzow, the Austrian Minister, presented, in the name of the Great Powers, a Memorandum to Pope Gregory, recommending, to a great extent, changes in the Pontifical Administration similar to those which are now desired. I cannot say that the motives of Austria were of the purest kind when she thus interposed on behalf of liberal institutions. The Austrian regiments had just evacuated the Papal States, leaving only the usual garrisons in Ferrara and Comacchio. The Austrians wished Europe to understand that there still existed a necessity for their interference as between the Pope and his subjects. Whatever their motives might be, they took a prominent part in the preparation and presentation of the Memorandum; and it stands against them upon record now, that they would maintain the existing abuses of the Papal States—abuses, if possible, greater in the days of Pío Nono than even under the rule of the sixteenth Gregory. They—the Five Powers—began by telling the Pope, in very plain terms, that the time had arrived when the Government of his States must be put upon a solid basis “by means of timely ameliorations, such as he himself had promised at the outset of his reign.” They demanded that internal guarantees should be given, which should place these ameliorations beyond reach of the variations inherent in the nature of an electoral Government. They asked for an Organic Declaration which should set forth, emphatically, at least two points—first, that the improvements should be general throughout the States, not only confined to

the Provinces recently in insurrection, but that the capital and the districts which had remained faithful should share the benefits of the arrangements made; secondly, *That the laity should generally be admitted to administrative and judicial functions.* I think I have shown in a previous Letter, on the internal condition of the Roman States, how far this recommendation has been attended to in point of fact. The Five Powers then asked, specifically, for an entire reform of the judicial system and of the municipal and provincial administration, for the re-establishment and appointment of municipalities elected by the people, and for the institution of municipal privileges. They asked that Provincial Councils should be appointed and endowed with a substantial influence upon the affairs of the provinces. They pointed out the necessity of introducing good order into the financial affairs of the Papal States by a sound management of the public debt, by the appointment of a Supreme Board charged with the audit of the public accounts for the service of each year; they recommended that the construction of this Board should be above suspicion, and that it ought to include a certain number of members chosen by the Municipal Councils. I take particular note of this document, because it may well become necessary, as this discussion advances, to show what the conduct of Austria was in 1832 (in conjunction with the other Great Powers)—when it suited her purpose to allow that the Papal Government stood in need of reform—and notably to contrast it with the tone of the Austrian reply to Louis Napoleon's propositions during the Conferences of Paris.

The views of the Austrian Sovereign of our own day are not those of his predecessor. This weary Concordat which he recently concluded with Rome, to the eternal disgrace of his Government and the prejudice of his dominions, has paralysed his action. I do not think that Francis Joseph would have given his assent to the Memorandum of 1832; nor is it probable that, save upon grievous compulsion, and to avoid a war, he will now consent to take the Pope to task. What would the priests say? and the Jesuits? and his confessor? and the Archduchess Sophia, his mother? and his own pride?

As I am now merely jotting down diplomatic recollections—an "Old Man's Bubbles of the Past"—I would next take note of diplomatic action on the part of Austria of another kind. I refer to Austria's Secret Treaty with several of the Italian States, in November, 1844. It was on the 28th day of that month, and that year, that Austria made a

Secret Treaty with Sardinia, Tuscany, Modena, and Lucca, to remedy "many inconveniences" (Prince Metternich's language in his despatch to Count Dietrichstein, 9th November, 1847) "of the territorial arrangements fixed by the Congress of Vienna." This treaty had been kept secret until then. I observe *par parenthèse* that we must not forget the secret article of the Convention between Austria and the Two Sicilies, 29th April, 1815, by which the Neapolitan King bound himself in terms to be the blind satellite of Austria. Your Lordship, with your intimate knowledge of Italian affairs, will no doubt recollect that ignoble story of the last days of Charles Louis of Bourbon, and of his son, Charles Ferdinand, at Lucca; and how it came to pass that on the 1st September of a notable year, when England was busy with her partridges, the Lucchese rose upon their Duke—flushed him, as we should say—and how the Duke stepped out upon his balcony and promised everything his subjects demanded. He and his son then ran away to Massa, in the Modenese, and negotiated the cession of their life-interest in Lucca to the Grand-Duke of Tuscany under this arrangement. The young Prince subsequently came to a bad end in Parma.

On the 11th of December, 1847, Lord Palmerston—therein, I believe, fully borne out by your Lordship's approval—declined to take notice of this treaty as an existing fact. I confess, on looking over the treaty, and still more on considering the names of the parties to it, I was astonished, not so much at what I did see, as what I did not see. How Prince Metternich could commit so huge a blunder in the year 1844 (it is not so remote a date but that we can remember the condition of Europe at the time) as then to dissociate his Sovereign from what our French neighbours would call *solidarité* with the other great Powers in Italian affairs, I have never been able to understand. The storm was soon about to burst upon him; but the Austrian diplomatists went on as the human race did on the eve of the deluge, dancing and feasting, and telling each other to the last that the barometer stood at "set fair." What need of umbrellas and repentance? Why should Austria, in 1848, suppose that her existence in Italy was seriously threatened? It is incredible, but it is the fact, that within a few weeks before Radetzki was driven out of Milan—I mean in January, 1848—Austria, Russia, and Prussia presented a collective note against the bare promise of a Constitution by the King of Naples. The Austrian Government was soon despatching notes of a very

different kind to every Cabinet where they could make their voices heard. There was one Sovereign, however, over whose head that tempest of 1848 swept like a passing cloud over the Caucasus. The Czar Nicholas, secure behind his barriers of ice and snow, and with a firm conviction that come what might his well-drilled regiments would remain firm, could afford to despise the commotions of Western Europe. There was no occasion why he should abandon his own fixed notions of government; and, accordingly, on the 12th of February, 1848, by the Emperor's order, Count Nesselrode wrote to Count Brunow:—"In Sicily the Emperor will recognise no changes which, under whatever form or pretext, should be equivalent to the rupture or weakening of the bonds which unite the two great portions of the Kingdom, the indivisible Sovereignty of which belongs to the existing dynasty." There was a little job at Constantinople which the Emperor then had in his head; but I verily believe that, in 1848, sentimental sympathy with absolute power prevailed more with him even than the fulfilment of his long-cherished and gorgeous designs upon the "sick-man's" inheritance. Talk of Scotchmen hanging together, there is no one like an absolute King, when the pinch comes, to help his brother King! Even Francis IV., of Modena, than whom a more beggarly miser never walked the earth except his successor, could draw his purse-strings to assist—and largely to assist—those two interesting Sovereigns, Don Carlos and Dom Miguel.

But to proceed, my Lord. I now turn to an affair of a very different kind. On the 15th of April, 1848, Austria sent a very touching appeal to England for British intervention, to obtain a suspension of hostilities in Italy. On the 14th of May there came yet another, and a more agonized cry from Vienna. That wonderful old fabric of the Austrian monarchy seemed to have given way at last, and for the first time for thirty years and more no one seemed disposed to pay the slightest attention to Prince Metternich. Austria was willing to do almost anything to secure peace. She would give up the Treaty of Vienna, she would give up Lombardy, she would, in effect, give up Venetia, retaining only a nominal suzerainty over it. All these offers were despatched post haste to London. It was *Italy's moment*, but the moment was allowed to slip by! I ask you, my Lord, with that respect which is due to your long experience and high position in the counsels of Europe—is there not *another moment* even now?

The political kaleidoscope revolved with more than usual rapidity during that memorable year 1848. Alas, for that good month of May! we made the gambler's mistake, and have paid the gambler's penalty. May expired, and June set in. The chances were slightly turning against Austria; but still the crisis was an awful one for her, as far as her Italian dominions were concerned. She would still make a most earnest bid for English support, although the fervour of her liberality had even now begun to wane. Still, my Lord, as I am taking stock of Austrian declarations, I would very particularly note the assurance sent from Vienna to London in the month of June, 1848, "Should Venetia come again under the Austrian power, that kingdom should enjoy a free Constitution."

June soon came to an end—and in July the hopes of Austria had revived. It was more than doubtful if Piedmont could long maintain the unequal struggle. Under these circumstances, the Sardinian King applied for the mediation of France. It was a time for action, not for consultation, or if for consultation, then, of the briefest kind. The Government of General Cavaignac agreed to mediate in concert with England. There was to be a Conference at Brussels. M. de Tocqueville and Sir H. Ellis were to settle this Italian difficulty. They settled it, even as we are settling it now.

The tide of war had now set in on the Austrian side. It was flood time with her now, where it had so lately been dreary and desolate ebb. Her arms were again in the ascendant; and now, on the 29th of September, she declared that she would not, under any conditions, resign any portion of her Italian possessions. From that time to the present, I have but little to say of her actions in Italy, beyond what I have recorded in the preceding Letters. She has not only recovered possession of her old territories in Italy, but actually extended and consolidated her influence. Were it not for the small cloud at Rome, and for the distant mutterings of the public opinion of Europe, and the Conference of Paris, Austria might well imagine that the revolutionary movements of 1848 had been a hideous dream.

If I refer at all to the proceedings of the late Paris Conference, it is rather for form's sake, and to carry my memoranda down to the latest date. All Europe knows what was the opinion expressed by England and France upon that occasion. The specific propositions offered by France to Austria, with reference to the Papal Government, were substantially identical with those which I have noted above as presented by the Five Great

Powers to the Pope, more than a quarter of a century ago. Austria could approve of the changes then, when it suited her purpose to cast a doubt upon the stability of the Pope's Government—not so now, when she herself is lying prostrate under the Concordat. Here is the language she now holds—I take it from the official records of the Conference :—"The Plenipotentiaries of Austria have acceded to the wish expressed by the Plenipotentiaries of France for the evacuation of the Pontifical States as soon as it can be effected without prejudice to the tranquillity of the country, and to the consolidation of the authority of the Holy See." There is nothing like fixing limits of time with accuracy and precision. Have they been reached yet?

Nothing, as your Lordship knows, could be more complete than the adhesion of England to the views of France upon the occasion of these Conferences with reference to the affairs of Italy. Lord Clarendon, indeed, during the negotiations, expressed himself with unusual vigour for a diplomatist. "It must, doubtless," said he, "be admitted in principle, that no Government has a right to interfere in the internal affairs of other States; but there are cases in which the exception to this rule becomes equally a right and a duty. The *Italian Governments* seem to have conferred this right, and to have imposed this duty upon Europe."

Whilst upon the question of the policy of intervention, I would remind your Lordship of very memorable words used so far back as the beginning of 1821 by an English statesman, the value of whose judgments has been more proved the more they have been tested. It was in the debate on the Address in reply to the King's Speech that William Lamb, afterwards Lord Melbourne, said :—

"It was to the principle of non-interference on the part of this country that he objected. What had been the consequences of a similar principle when the partition of Poland took place? Were they peace and tranquillity? No. The consequence on that occasion of that principle of non-interference on the part of this country with the designs of foreign Potentates, had been the long and inveterate wars in which Europe had been since involved, and which had left this country and the Continent in the state of distress in which they now found themselves. *Such had been the disastrous result of our declining on that occasion to co-operate with France in interfering to prevent the iniquitous project from being carried into effect.* If hostilities were once to commence in any part of Europe, no man could tell how far they might

extend ; and he urged them to such an interference with respect to Naples as might prevent such calamity. By such a wise and timely interference the peace and tranquillity of this country would stand a better chance of being effectively secured than by the indulgence of any fallacious hopes that if hostilities were once commenced in any quarter whatever we might be able to keep this country from being compelled to enter in the contest."

And so I will leave this part of the case, as not being one on which my own mind lays so much stress, as upon other points which I have urged at greater length. I have shown, I think, that the interference of England (with the exception of that miserable Sicilian business) has been on the side of Italian independence. If we now resolve upon the nobler and more generous policy, at least we shall not be greatly inconsistent with ourselves and the previous diplomacy of England.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c., &c

LETTER VII.

•THE ITALIAN CHARACTER.

MY LORD,—Is it a principle in ethics that we are justified in denying to individuals or nations the exercise of a right because they possibly might abuse it? If so, the system of government established by the Jesuits in Paraguay is the one which all civilised nations should choose for their model. It is said that we must not interfere in any way with the twin despotisms of Rome and Vienna in Italy, because, forsooth, the Italians are incapable of freedom; because, if the fetters were withdrawn from their souls and bodies, they would instantly celebrate the bloody saturnalia of emancipated slaves. I remember well when this was given as a valid reason for retaining in slavery the negro bondsmen in Jamaica. But, has there been any general massacre of the planters since England proclaimed the emancipation of all slaves within her dominions? I blush to speak of such an argument when I think of the many noble and intellectual men who abound in Italy—aye, and of the middle classes, the inhabitants of the towns, and the stout peasantry of that country. What evidence had we of the Malay spirit attributed to them when the ball was at their feet and the power was in their hands in 1848? Did the “excesses” occur when the Italians had taken the country into their own hands, or when the Governments were restored? If such a tale of indictment could be framed against the insurgent leaders as might with perfect truth and propriety be framed against the old rulers of Italy, I could almost find it in my heart to give up my case.

But then it is urged there is manifest proof that the Italians are not fit for freedom, because they have not been able hitherto to win it for themselves. There are a few circumstances which we should take into account before pronouncing judgment in this matter. Between the years 1815-30, the system of the Holy Alliance prevailed throughout Europe. Not only the trained legions of Austria were there to keep the Italians down, but it may with perfect truth be said that every drilled soldier in Europe—every cartouch actually in store—was at the service of despotism. I wish I could except our own country from all

share of blame in the matter; but when I look back on Lord Castlereagh's policy during the first half of this period—at the proceedings of the Congress of Verona, and other incidents of the like kind—I cannot say that English hands are pure. In 1820 and 1821 a Revolution took place in Naples and Piedmont. The Austrians invaded both countries, and put it down. Was that measure a fair practical inference from the Treaty of Vienna? Rather, was it not a practical result of the Holy Alliance? In 1821 Piedmont and Naples had risen, and their insurrections would, most assuredly, have been successful but for the armed intervention of Austria. In 1831, again, Central Italy—that is to say, Modena, the Legations, Romagna in general, and Parma—rose against their tyrants. The insurrection was for a time successful. The Duke of Modena and his party were compelled to take refuge in Mantua, under cover of the Austrian guns. The same ordinary panacea was applied. Austrian regiments entered the disturbed provinces, and with well-organised artillery, cavalry, and with abundant munitions of war, succeeded in getting the better of the insurgents. Well, the next year, in 1832, Central Italy rose again, and again was put down by similar means. At the same time the French quietly took possession of Ancona.

Now, is it not rather hard to blame the Italians, and pronounce them unfit for liberty, because they cannot—without artillery, without cavalry, without munitions, without drilled troops—succeed in a contest with the armies of the two great military monarchies of Europe, or even with the forces at the disposal of the Austrian Government? If proof were wanting of their courage and goodwill in the cause, surely it might be found in the events of 1848. Just about ten years ago, Europe had a practical illustration of how any attempt on the part of the Italians to regain their liberties can be put down. Will any man say—will Cardinal Antonelli assert or Count Buol maintain—that, if the Italians had been left to settle conclusions with their rulers, without the presence of a single foreign soldier, Italy would not at the present moment be free, from Mount Cenis to Reggio? I will venture to say that, if Pio Nono and Francis Joseph were clatting together on the subject of their Italian possessions, they would both tacitly admit, as the basis of their conversation, that it is only by foreign bayonets that Italy can be maintained in its agonising fidelity to the Holy See and the Imperial Crown.

The calculation has been made by very competent persons of what would be necessary that the Italians might maintain a military contest with Austria upon an even balance of chances. This calculation, I say, has been made by the French authorities, who certainly would be rather inclined to understate than to overrate the necessities of the case. In the first place, they must have *ten years of independence*. The next requisite would be 200,000 disciplined troops—20,000 of them cavalry; 500 pieces of field artillery; 200 siege guns—and these guns would require at least 50,000 draught-horses. Such is the French calculation.

I think I may assume that the argument of the unfitness of the Italians for liberty, either because they have not tried to recover their liberty, or because they have failed in the attempt, has fairly broken down in presence of the facts.

Again, what right have we to assume that the Italians would misuse that golden right of humanity, if their tyrants were once driven from their soil? It may well be the case—I think it very probable it would be the case—that the whole Peninsula would not court the dominion of one Ruler, even of a native Prince. Why should it? Protesting all the while that the particular form of Government the Italians might prefer is no business of ours, I would say that if Naples should choose to remain as one State, Romagna as another, Tuscany as another, the world has seen instances of such arrangements carried out with a reasonable degree of success. One has heard of the United States of North America, of the United Provinces of Holland, of the United Cantons of Switzerland, and I am not aware that the world has suffered because different provinces united for common action in national objects, and chose to retain their municipal independence. After all, everything we know of municipal independence in modern times has come to us from the Italians. At the Peace of Constance, a powerful foreign monarch was forced to come to terms with the allied municipal Governments of Italy. This was before Magna Charta. It is true enough that even some twenty years ago there were serious differences of character, and to a certain extent jealousies, between the Italian States; but these have well nigh disappeared under the pressure of a common misfortune. And I am very sure that at no time within human recollection has there been such hatred between a Venetian and a Neapolitan, a Roman and a Florentine, as between an Irishman and an Englishman.

I fully grant, moreover, with one exception of which I will presently speak, that the experiment of constitutional liberty has not hitherto answered in Southern Europe. It has, however, invariably been tried in the presence of Sovereigns eager to put it down, and supported on apt occasions by overwhelming military power from without. I must be understood as merely speaking with such weight as may attach to the expression of a single individual; but I can say for myself that I have known many Italians, in various parts of Italy, gifted, to all appearances, with every faculty for public life (as Englishmen would understand the matter)—men of great knowledge and foresight—adepts in the doctrines of Political Economy when that science was somewhat contemptuously regarded by ourselves. I believe that, could Italy once be purged of her oppressors, statesmen and orators would not be wanting. Philosophers and historians are there already. If we turn from the civil to the military virtues, I may surely refer to the period when Italian officers held their own amongst the bravest and most capable of the paladins of the First Napoleon—an Italian himself.

I know how much weight a well-known authority carries with my countrymen, and I am about to cite a witness who will, I think, be admitted on all sides to be a very competent one as to the facts of Italian affairs. I speak of M. de Sismondi. Although in the preceding pages I have been merely recounting incidents with which I have been intimately acquainted, it will not prejudice my case if I cite the testimony of the illustrious historian of the Italian Republics. I am about, then, to incorporate into my own pages the concluding page from that great writer's history. "Such was the work," writes M. de Sismondi, "which the French accomplished by twenty years of victory; it was doubtless incomplete, and left much to be desired; but it possessed in itself the principle of greater advancement; it promised to revive Italy, liberty, virtue, and glory. *It has been the work of the coalition to destroy all, to place Italy again under the galling yoke of Austria; to take from her, with political liberty, civil and religious freedom, and even freedom of thought; to corrupt her morals, and to heap upon her the utmost degree of humiliation. Italy is unanimous in abhorring this ignominious yoke. Italy, to break it, has done all that could be expected of her. In a struggle between an established Government and a nation, the former has all the advantages; it has in its favour rapidity of communication, certainty of information, soldiers, arsenals, fortresses, and finances. The*

people have only their unarmed bands, and their masses unaccustomed to act together. Nevertheless, in every struggle during these fifteen years in Italy" (and it has been the same ever since) "between the nation and its oppressors, the victory has remained with the people. At Naples, in Sicily, in Piedmont, in the States of the Church, at Modena and Parma, unarmed masses have seized the arms of the soldiers; men chosen by the people have taken the places of the despots in their own palaces. The Italians, everywhere victorious over their tyrants, have, it is true, everywhere been forced back under the yoke with redoubled cruelty by the league of foreign despots. Attacked, before they could have given themselves a Government, or formed a treasury, arsenals, or an army, by the Sovereign of another nation who reckons not less than 30,000,000 of subjects, they did not attempt a hopeless resistance, which would have deprived them of every chance for the future. Let those who demand more of them begin by doing as much themselves.

"Italy is crushed, but her heart still beats with the love of liberty, virtue, and glory; she is chained and covered with blood, but she still knows her strength and her future destiny; she is insulted by those for whom she feels that she has opened the way to every improvement; but she feels that she is formed to take the lead again, and Europe will know no repose till the nation, which in the dark ages lighted the torch of civilisation with that of liberty, shall be enabled herself to enjoy the light which she created."

So wrote M. de Sismondi in 1830; and it would be an easy task to heap up illustrations in proof of his assertions which should fill, not the few pages which I am able to devote to the purpose, but volumes upon volumes. Let those who have not had the opportunity of following out the subject for themselves, and who have no practical acquaintance with the Italian Peninsula and the Italian people, consult the works of Colletta, Farini, Azeglio, Capponi, Tommaseo, Gualterio, Gioberti, Amari, Palmieri, and of other writers of equal authority, and they will soon find if the Italians have not done all that men could be expected to do to work their way from slavery to freedom—from darkness to light. The truth is, that since 1815, unarmed, unprepared Italy has been compelled, in her struggles, to free herself from the grasp of her oppressors—to fight the battle against Europe prepared and armed. Do we not read in the solemn pages of Athens' oldest tragic poet that the twin genii,

Force and Strength, had power to rivet Prometheus to the rock? There they left him in the wilderness, exposed to the ignominious attacks of the obscene bird which had been appointed to prey upon his vitals—mangled, indignant, and alone!

A child born in Italy in the year 1815 would now be well-nigh forty-five years of age. When I think of the moral atmosphere which that child, that boy, that youth, that man has been compelled to breathe, by Heavens, I wonder not that the Italians can be justly accused of certain vices, but that they have any virtue left, and that, like Nebuchadnezzar, they do not walk about upon all fours, and browse, in mute ignorance, upon Austrian artichokes. Be it remembered that the object of their rulers has been throughout to emasculate and corrupt the people. They have been schooled by priests, watched by spies, arrested by policemen, and murdered by foreign soldiers. Had I not been familiar with the example of Italy, I might, perhaps carelessly and without due reflection, have written or said that I supposed it was as possible to educate a nation to vice as to virtue. Thank God, this is not so! Man cannot so degrade his fellow man as to stamp out of his heart all traces of the Divine hand. Italy is a standing proof to the contrary. Whilst Roman priests and German soldiers have done their worst to break the very springs of action amongst the Italians, let us reflect that even these poor Italians may challenge comparison with any European nation for domestic virtue and integrity—and for audacity, the only public virtue which they can practise. There is an idea abroad that immorality prevails to a greater degree in Italy than elsewhere. Well-informed persons read their Goldoni, and talk about the *cicichism*, and so forth, of eighty years ago with a very knowing air. These are things of another day, and long after they existed in Italy, that great moralist, the Prince Regent, was practically illustrating his lessons in a very convincing way at home. Nor do I think that the France of the Regency, of Louis XVI., of the Directory, or of the Empire, had anything to boast of in this respect. Take any date you will for the last two centuries (and let that date, if you will, be February, 1859), would any English mother, if it were possible to inform such an one of the true facts of the case, rather trust her son at Vienna or at Turin? Frugality, probity, and temperance are as much the

* We are reminded at this trifling, as it is properly called, of the Princess Ursula, who, at the hands of Prince Napoleon-James, did not that great nobility (the deposed French Emperor) give his daughter to the uncle

characteristics of Italian as of English households; indeed, as far as the latter virtue goes, we might take a leaf with advantage out of their book. But it is said the Italians are perfidious, treacherous, false; they cannot trust each other, or they would long since have been able to work out their freedom. I think I have shown that this inability to work out their freedom may safely be referred to other causes. That the Italians to whom the country looks as leaders in any great crisis are more prone to betray each other than the leaders of any other insurgent country, I utterly deny. It is impossible to quote an instance upon record of any such person betraying his country or his fellows. Of course, while conspiracy lurks in cellars, sneaks up the back-stairs, and handles a stiletto, a well-organised police will always be able to obtain information. Ireland has had her "approvers" and England her informers in all such cases. The State trials of our own country, and, notably, one in which a very illustrious ancestor of your Lordship was vitally concerned, furnish very mournful proof that such treachery as this is of all ages and all countries. Where there is dirty work to be done, in most parts of the world there are dirty hands ready for the job.

Whilst we are talking of what the Italians are and how they have been made so, I would say a word or two of how Austria teaches the young idea how to shoot in her Lombardo-Venetian kingdom. I have before me a little work, issued by authority from the Imperial printing-presses at Milan. It is a catechism to be used in the second class of elementary schools. The writer throws off with two clear definitions as the basis of the doctrines which it is his object to inculcate upon the little Lombards. "What is country (*patria*)?" asks the Austrian Dominie; and the ingenuous disciple snuffles forth, in genuine academic sing-song, the following reply: "By *country* is understood not only the land where we are born and brought up, but also that to which we are united, and in which we enjoy the protection and benefit of citizenship!" Bravo, Luigi! well answered, my son. Now let Beppo tell us something about the origin of kingly authority? Beppo replies, possibly with some kind of hesitation, as this is a very high and abstract point, "Emperors, kings, and *other superiors*, have their power from God, because they are the substitutes of God upon earth." Alas, alas, Beppo of my heart, if

of this same Prince, that uncle *having a wife alive at the time!* Was he—the father who afterwards again even more fully sacrificed that daughter during the lifetime of her husband—received with less enthusiasm when he visited us in 1815?

such be the substitutes!—but it will be time enough by and bye for thee to work out this sum in thy hot Venetian brain! We will have the class to tell us something of the duties of fidelity from subjects to Sovereigns:—

“Q. How must subjects behave towards their Sovereign?

“A. Subjects must behave towards their Sovereign like faithful servants or slaves (*servi*) towards their master.

“Q. Why must subjects behave like slaves?

“A. Because the Sovereign is their master, and has power over their property, as well as their life.

“Q. Are subjects bound to obey also bad Sovereigns?

“A. Yes; subjects are bound to obey not only good, but also bad Sovereigns.”

This doctrine is very complete; but, having thus laid the foundation, the instructor follows his rules of right into their practical consequences. Let us see what little Lombardo-Venetian boys must do in time of war:—

“Q. What must subjects abstain from (besides treason)?

“A. They must abstain from talking unreasonably of the events of the war.

“Q. And why so?

“A. Because, as they are not aware of the real circumstances of such events, they easily can deceive the populace with their discourses.

“Q. What must citizens and country people do, not to be suspected?

“A. They must keep quietly at home, mind their own business—*work and pray*.

“Q. How must subjects behave when the enemy causes them losses?

“A. They must bear such losses with patience, and put their trust in God and their Sovereign.”

This catechism is a perfect mine of illustration for Imperial dealings with subject Italy. I will content myself, however, with making one more extract from it, and then pass on to other affairs. It is obvious that the subject of desertion from the Imperial armies is one which requires very emphatic instruction while the future recruit's intelligence is yet in a waxen state. Our friend, the Dominie, handles it like a master:—

“Q. With what temporal punishment does God chastise deserters?

“A. God punishes deserters with sickness, with misery, with disgrace.

“ Q. With what other punishment does God chastise deserters ?

“ A. With EVERLASTING DAMNATION !”

So far of the metaphysical part of the business ; but in order that the young recruit may have some more tangible form of apprehension present to his mind, the instructor passes to the chapter of stick :—

“ Q. How do Sovereigns punish deserters ?

“ A. With flogging, and sometimes even with death.

“ Q. Is not death too severe a punishment for this crime ?”

As may be seen, the Dominie doubts, but the disciple is dogmatic, and answers with emphasis :—

“ A. The punishment of death is *not* too severe for deserters, because, having perjured themselves, they sin more grievously than robbers.

“ Q. How must a deserter under punishment behave ?

“ A. He must bear it patiently, and without murmuring, or cursing his superiors.

“ Q. How must he encourage himself to patience during the punishment ?

“ A. He ought to consider that he has deserved it, and *adore Divine justice*.

“ Q. What is the duty of deserters ?

“ A. Deserters ought to return to their corps.

“ Q. Why are they bound to do so ?

“ A. Because by deserting they have stolen themselves from the State.

“ Q. Can you produce in this respect the authority of the Holy Scriptures ?

“ A. I can produce a passage of St. Paul respecting slaves. Onesimus having run away from Philemon, St. Paul ordered him to return to his master.

“ Q. Are parents permitted to send money or dress to their children who are deserters ?

“ A. No ; they are not.

“ Q. What is the punishment deserved by deserters who don't return to their corps ?

“ A. They deserve confiscation of whatever they possess in the country.”

Let us now leave Italian deserters to adore Divine justice under the somewhat trying circumstances suggested in the catechism, and pass on to other matters.*

* Many Englishmen, who, being most concerned for the welfare of Italy, dread above all her deliverance from her present masters, and foresee with trepidation the

At the very root and foundation—deep in the very heart and marrow of the question—lies the fact that it is the Papacy, the presence of the vicegerent of the Almighty upon earth in the shape of a petty Italian Prince, which is the true solution of it. I do not believe that in the long run French, Spaniard, or German—any or all of them—would have been able to prevail against the system of polity which would have arisen out of the union of barbaric strength with Roman civilization, but for that wretched bequest of the Countess Matilda's, and the successful game meditated by the Tuscan Hildebrand at Cluny, and played out with such skill, that ere he rose from the table he had kept an Emperor waiting at Canossa, barefoot in the snow for three winter days, before he would admit him to sue for pardon. I do not deny that there have been patriotic Popes; but the system was stronger than the individual, and has ever been the canker or curse of Italy. The Japanese are the only people who know how to deal with the holy head of a theocracy. They keep him in high state at Meaco, but he is permitted to meddle in the temporal affairs of the country as much as the bright and distant sun which illuminates their islands; he levies from them no taxes, enlists no foreign troops, makes no treaties, has no prisons, no galleys, no hangmen. Happy, wise Japanese! From Machiavelli down to our own time the greatest thinkers of Europe have unanimously put their finger on the Vatican, and said, "There is the evil!" "There," exclaimed even Lord Derby, "is the plague-spot!" Could an Elba or a St. Helena be found for Pío Nono and his successors, it might be well. Italy is sick of priestcraft, and for many a century has expiated in sackcloth and ashes its presence in her provinces and her towns. And from Italy has gone forth the mystery which has pervaded and enslaved a great portion of Europe.

Even at the present moment, when its decadence is forward and its fall almost to be looked for in our own time, how faithful is the Papacy to the condition of its own existence—how grand and Czar-like in its contempt for the Cossacks of the true faith! Has not the Pope stuck up a pillar yonder in the

sufferings which that country might have to undergo were the French successful in assisting to drive the Austrians out of it, and who feelingly uplift their eyes when they bring to mind what the Italians had to endure from that wicked tyrant Napoleon I., are respectfully requested to search the records of those times, and point out anything approaching to this vile and blasphemous trash approved or even tolerated by Napoleon's Government in Italy.

Piazza di Spagna, at Rome, in commemoration of that notable fraud of priests—the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception? The true faith now-o'-days—in the latter half of the nineteenth century—is Mariolatry.

When I say, then, that the vices and superstitions of the Italians have been imposed upon them by foreign and extraneous influence, but that their virtues are all their own, I think I have said enough to prove my point. Surely if these people are as good as they are under the rule of the Pope and the foreign Emperor, we have a right to expect that, if left to themselves, they would be found a useful member of the comity of nations. It is the height of impertinence or of folly in us to speculate as to what the particular form of government might be which the Italians would ultimately choose as fittest for their wants and most in harmony with their wishes, and because “in wandering mazes lost” we can find no end to our own speculations, to decide that they must still be retained in abject slavery, both of body and soul. At least the Italians are unanimous in their abhorrence of foreign domination. Unanimity in favour of independence is the first step to freedom and self-government. If Europe will not leave Italy alone (which would be the wisest course of all)—if there must ever be a league of the European Powers for intervention in Italian affairs—let us intervene on the side of freedom, not of slavery. Let us all agree to respect the independence of Italy for a time, as we have hitherto respected the integrity of the Swiss Cantons, exacting, of course, the reciprocal obligations which such a recognised neutrality would imply. Give Italy ten years of breathing time, and she will then hold her own amidst the nations of the world, even though no statesmen now living would venture to predict what form her Government would have assumed in the year 1870. In 1900 what might she not become!

I have the honour to be, &c., &c., &c.

LETTER VIII.

THE CONCLUSION.

MY LORD,—I have now well-nigh attained the limits within which these remarks must be confined. A volume, not pages, might be filled with the recital of the frightful sufferings of the Italian nation. Had my space permitted, I could have cited authority upon authority in behalf of foreign interference in the affairs of this or that nation, and have called the Statesmen and Ministers of despotic Powers to testify against themselves. I have now, however, arrived at the point where I would ask my countrymen to consider what they should do upon the whole matter.

I think I may assume, as granted upon all sides, that the condition of the Papal States is so bad that it could not be worse. Surely England would see, with pleasure, a term put, once for all, to all this misery and oppression. And here, at all events, there is no question of the violation of treaties or of diplomatic arrangements.

Secondly. I think the proofs I have given of the stern and highly-organised injustice of Austria in her own Italian Provinces must at least deprive her of the sympathy of Englishmen should her Italian dominions be challenged by any other Power. Before the Austrian Cæsar (even according to the most technical construction of the Law of Nations) can call upon the signatories of the Treaty of Vienna to stand by him, he must at least show that his own hands are clean. *Who seeks equity must do equity!* But suppose the case to be what it really is—namely, that France should now meditate a disregard of the letter of the treaty, while Austria has violated both its spirit and its letter for the last forty years and more—are we bound to interfere in her behalf? I am sure it must be a very clear obligation indeed which would induce Englishmen to assist Austrian troops in butchering the Italians.

Thirdly. I have jotted down a few “*and*” from the foul chronicles of Ferdinand, the King of the Two Sicilies. On this point, however, it were needless for me to dwell, because the English Government—backed in that course by the verdict

of the English people—has refused to hold any further intercourse with the Neapolitan King, because of his atrocious misgovernment and cruelty.

Fourthly. I have ventured to suggest that treaties were made for man, not man made for treaties. Whilst everything else around us is changing, is the Treaty of Vienna to be held the only unchanging thing? I do not know why the handiwork of those over-cunning old diplomatists of 1815 should be held to be stable as the Decalogue, and binding on the human race to all time. At any rate, the practical common sense of mankind has long since given a very sufficient decision upon this point. When we speak of the Treaty of Vienna now-a-days, we speak but of its shreds and tatters. The despotic Powers of Europe have often enough violated the treaty without the smallest attention to the wishes or feeling of England. I have added, and on the point I would presently say a few more words, that it is puerile to invoke the provisions of the old parchment, when the swords can be readily engaged without any violation of them, ostensible or real.

Fifthly. I have enumerated some of the principal diplomatic dealings with Italy for many years past, and have shown that the public opinion, even of the governing classes in Europe, has been gradually gravitating towards the conviction that the *status quo* in Central Italy can no longer be maintained. The last occasion—and it was a very notable one—when public action was taken on this matter was during the recent Conferences of Paris. The time seems to have arrived when the opinions then expressed by the English, French, and Sardinian statesmen should be carried out in practice.

Sixthly. I have endeavoured to show that a not uncommon opinion entertained of the Italians is a most unfair one. It has been received from the lips of those who are most strongly interested in maintaining the delusion. I should hold it to be most probable that the Italians are reasonably well prepared for free institutions; but, at any rate, this is a point on which it were wise, as your Lordship has contended, to leave the decision to themselves. Take the worst contingency which could happen. Is it possible that Italy could be more useless to the world than she is, even now, as an Austrian barrack, and a sanctuary for a horde of droning priests?

And now what is England to do in this matter? I believe it just possible that if the English Government were to throw England's sceptre decisively into the scale on the side of Austria,

and that were the Prussian Regent to lend his active co-operation on the same side, the French Emperor would be induced to desist from a resolution which is at present fixed. There is, however, great danger in such a course. In the first place, I doubt if the English people would support the action of their rulers. I do not believe that Englishmen will consent to expend their blood and their treasure in any such quarrel. What have we to do with the maintenance of Austrian rule in Lombardy? of despotic power, which has been so foully abused, in Naples? of the Pope's spiritual and temporal position in the Roman States? I will venture to say that, did not other considerations stand in the way, you would not find an Englishman in ten thousand who would not heartily rejoice if to-morrow these various forms of tyranny and oppression were swept into the abyss of time. As a Protestant nation, we think the Pope's spiritual supremacy to be a delusion; as a free people, we detest his ignominious abuse of his temporal authority. In Lombardy and in the Two Sicilies, it is the same thing, with the difference that in these two districts of the Italian Peninsula religious is not added to secular disgust. England can have, and has had, but the one wish that Italy should be prosperous and free; and to be either, she must be independent. We derive no advantage from her misery and degradation. If wish of ours could produce such a result, we would gladly see the last Austrian soldier disappear down the passes of the Tyrol, and the Roman priests compelled to confine their attention to the discharge of their strictly spiritual functions. It is, of course, a dream to expect that in our time mankind will be wise enough to take the true view of the Pope's spiritual claims; but, at least, let us have done with him as a temporal prince. Whether that would be the view of nations which still adhere to the Roman Catholic form of faith, it is not for me to say, but certainly it would be the view of the great majority of Englishmen.

There is another danger in this course which is not slight: we cannot forget that after all Prussia and Austria are rival Powers in Germany. It was but a few years back that the two nations were all but coming to blows. They actually confronted each other in marshes array, and had it not been that Prussia gave way at the critical moment, German blood would have been freely shed by German hands on German soil. There is quite as much disruption between a Northern and a Southern German, as between any two rival States in the

Italian Peninsula. Besides, granting that Prussia could be brought to join hands with Austria and England in such a quarrel, the irrevocable testimony of history is there to show what the value of Prussia's alliance has ever been as a member of a coalition. It required the capture of her capital, and the subjugation of her provinces, before she could be brought to lay her hand seriously to the plough during the last great European war. The unworthy part played by Prussia during the recent war in the Crimea, has not yet passed away from the recollection of Europe. We have, moreover, to take into account, should we decide upon this course, that the alliance with France must be considered at an end. A union between France and Russia, with all the inconveniences such an alliance may entail upon England, is the natural result of such a policy.

I discuss such an idea rather for form's sake, than because there is any serious chance that it will be adopted. The English people never will be persuaded to go to war that the Italians may remain enslaved. No Minister would ask for the support of the country in such a quarrel, and he would never obtain it, if he did. There is, however, a second course which it seems probable enough that England will adopt if matters are pushed to extremities; and I am far from saying that there is not a good deal to be urged in favour of it. We may resolve that this dispute is no affair of ours; that the French and Austrians may cut each other's throats as they may think fit upon the plains of Lombardy. If there be a stout fight on either side, by the time the campaign is over both combatants, it may fairly be supposed, will be so weakened that England and the other neutral Powers will have little to dread from the subsequent efforts of either combatant against the liberties of Europe. We may reasonably say, that although in the abstract we wish well to the cause of Italian liberty, yet we are by no means convinced that it will be much helped by the substitution of the military supremacy of France in the Italian Peninsula for the military supremacy of Austria. If the Emperor of the French chooses to provoke a war with Austria at the present time, on his own head be the peril! He does so, not at our suggestion. Why should we be dragged into an unreasonable contest, when we desire it the least? Truly we will not take part against the Italians, because we wish them well, and we should rejoice at their deliverance; but we think that they cannot succeed without letting loose upon Italy the flood of a French invasion. One main objection to such a course probably is, that should

Louis Napoleon succeed (backed only by Piedmont and the insurgent population) in driving the Austrians out of Italy, he may not impossibly, on the morrow of his victory, be shrewdly inclined to discount it in his own way. France and Italy combined under one military ruler, as in the days of the first Napoleon, might prove of very serious weight in the future counsels of Europe. Suppose—I put such a case but for illustration's sake—the French Emperor, after purging Lombardy from the Austrians, were to ask from the enthusiasm and gratitude of the people, that his cousin—the one who married that young Sardinian Princess the other day—should be placed at the head of a Lombard Kingdom, would they say him nay? The danger is, that if the other great Powers of Europe stand aloof from an operation of this kind, they materially detract from their own right to be heard when the day of reckoning has arrived.

Nor would it be a small matter that England had stood quietly aloof, while France, at her own risk, had solved the Italian problem. How much, not only of dignity, but of real power, would England have lost if, a few months hence, Italy should be celebrating her liberation at Milan and at Rome, and the French Emperor alone should be the author of that mighty change!

And here I would suggest that the policy of Russia as to Italy accords with that of France; that Russia promoted the Sardinian marriage; and that after France and Russia have settled, without our intervention, the affairs of Western, they may unite for the same purpose in Eastern Europe.

Take the other contingency, that France should be worsted in the contest. I have yet to learn that England would be the gainer by any alteration which the French people might be pleased to make in their form of Government. Louis Napoleon, as far as I know anything of the facts of the case, has in the main been a true and loyal ally to England. I give him credit for discernment enough to see that such an alliance offers the best guarantee for the duration of his power and the stability of his dynasty. And when I compare the results of the present alliance with those we reaped from our relations with the Monarchy of July, I think we have gained by the change.

So far, then, of two suggestions for our conduct. The first, which in the long run implies an alliance with Austria for the purpose of butchering and oppressing the Italian people, I

dismiss at once as utterly unworthy of regard. Come what may, England won't do that.

The second suggestion is for neutrality—a policy which has its advantages as well as its dangers. We may stand still whilst Austria and France fight it out on the plains of Lombardy. That is certainly a course which may recommend itself to many minds; but that course implies WAR with all its eventualities, and with all the chances that we may be drawn into it at a later period, whether we choose it or not.

There is a third course open to us, which implies active intervention, not for the sake of rushing into war, but for the sake of preserving the peace of Europe. Peace, I am sure, must be the object closest to everybody's heart; it is the result which I most ardently desire.

The question is as to the manner in which this desirable object can be best attained. It can, I think, be readily shown that the best means of attaining this end would be by a hearty understanding between the Governments of England and France, that there must be an end of the extensive influence of Austria in the Italian Peninsula; that we cannot, out of deference to her wishes and views, keep a barrel of gunpowder under our noses which may be ignited at any moment; and that, in point of fact, the Neapolitans, the Tuscans, the Modenese, the Romans, must be left to settle their affairs in their own way. If the Austrians reply that this exclusive influence throughout the Peninsula is the natural consequence of their possession of Lombardy, the inference is a very obvious one.

Let us, however, not deceive ourselves. If Italian matters are to be discussed at a General Conference of the Great Powers of Europe, it will surely be found that the system of rule adopted by Austria in Lombardy lies at the root of all these Italian complications. But for the Austrian Emperor's regiments, the Pope would be compelled, within a week, to come to terms with his subjects. The same proposition may be stated, with perfect truth, of the other Italian States. Austria must be prepared for a fundamental change in her system of Italian administration, or worse will come of it. From a Conference, Austria might obtain reasonable terms. From war what has she to expect—with France thundering at her gates, Russia hanging at her skirts, and England left to regret that she would not permit herself to be saved?

It is scarcely to be supposed that Austria, which dares much,

dare refuse to accept the advice of the Great Powers in the affairs of Italy. In that case, however, France would be left to take her own course, with the hearty sympathies of Europe at her back. We should feel that the French Emperor had exhausted every chance of maintaining the peace of the world before he had taken a step which implied war as its natural and inevitable consequence. Should Louis Napoleon be able to show—as he probably will be able to show—that he has left no stone unturned to come to an understanding with the great Powers, mainly with the English Government, for concerted actions in the affairs of Italy, much of the odium which is now attached in this country to his “policy” will be transferred to the “impolicy” of the other European statesmen who could have quieted the storm, but resolved to sit still, and let it burst. Has not the French Emperor pre-eminently a right to take action in Central Italy?

He disapproves of the French occupation of Rome. His protest whilst yet a deputy, his letter to Edgar Ney, are there on record to show that he disapproved of it from the first. He has ever been anxious to withdraw from a position which would have been ridiculous in the eyes of Europe, had it not entailed such tragical consequences upon the subjects of the Pope and upon the Italians generally. The Russian war and its pre-occupations have caused his decision upon the matter to hang in hand; but the time has arrived when the question must be finally disposed of, and it ought to be disposed of. It is Austria, and Austria alone, who has retained the French troops at Rome. Another very sensible inconvenience arising from the present state of things is, that Louis Napoleon is, at the present moment, and has been for a long time past, a target for the bullets, a mark for the stiletto of every crazy Italian patriot who may please to consider France as a willing agent in the oppression of Italy. I do not say such a consideration produces much effect upon the mind of a man to whom even his bitterest enemies have not denied the possession of unflinching personal courage; but as far as it goes, it is something.

I pass, however, to considerations which may be more potential with the minds of statesmen when it is not their own heads and bodies which are exposed to the action of powder and ball.

The only argument which I have ever heard against the propriety of requiring that the Roman States shall be evacuated by all foreign troops is, that there is a certainty that in such a

case the Roman people would rise the next day and commit excesses of the most frightful kind. What right have we to arrive at any conclusion of the sort? What evidence is there to show that, as soon as the foreign regiments have marched out of the territory, the Roman population would begin a system of indiscriminate pillage and slaughter? I am very sure when they had it all their own way they did nothing of the kind. I question very much if there be any capital in Europe—I do not except London or Paris—in which order would have been more strictly preserved than it was at Rome when there was a Revolutionary Government within and a foreign army without the walls. It is the height of impertinence on our part to maintain any such conclusion—without a tittle of evidence to support it—to the prejudice of a foreign people.

Again I say, that if England would come to an understanding with France upon the subject, Italy, beyond the Austrian limits, might be free in a month's time; and the peace of the world would actually be preserved, not endangered. It is not necessary for us to engage our fleets and armies in any conflict whatsoever, but simply to give the world to understand that our assistance or sympathy must not be calculated upon for maintaining the Italian Peninsula in spiritual and bodily thralldom.

There is this direct and palpable advantage in such a course, that it would put an end at once to all ambitious ideas of aggrandisement which now, rightly or wrongly, are attributed to the French Emperor. His precipitancy would be tempered by our prudence, and a movement which might possibly be carried on for the exclusive benefit of France, would then most infallibly be converted into one for the benefit of Italy and of Europe.

The specific remedy which I then propose is that of a Conference of the great Powers to take the affairs of Italy into consideration, with a view to a peaceful solution of the difficulty. Europe has witnessed many Congresses to put down freedom in Italy: why should it not behold one to establish its independence? Failing this, I say that France is entitled to our hearty sympathy and good-will if she take upon herself the task of purging the Peninsula of the fearful tyranny under which it is now held. Let the French Emperor be in a position to say, "I have used my best efforts to arrive at a peaceful solution of this question, but in this I have been baffled. I undertake, in the face of my allies, of England, and of the world, that what-

ever the result of the contest may be, France shall aim at no selfish object, nor leave a French soldier upon Italian soil on the morrow of victory;" and I, for one, will say, God speed his work! There is no other alternative. If we would avoid all the hideous contingencies of war, war must be averted by the combined and earnest efforts of the statesmen and diplomatists of Europe. Surely, when we are threatened with a great calamity, it is better to make an effort to avert it, than to stand still with folded arms and do—nothing.

I cannot quite dismiss this portion of my subject without saying a few words on the certain results of inaction at the present time, even were France to recede from her present menacing attitude against Austria.

The certain result would be, and that ere long, the destruction of the little Constitutional kingdom of Sardinia.

In Italy there are two systems in practice. The one formally and ostensibly pervades four-fifths of the Peninsula—it is that of despotism, as represented by Austria. The other is the system of constitutional liberty which exists, but in a remote corner of Italy, and it is represented by Sardinia. One or other of these systems must prevail—one must kill the other—they cannot co-exist within the same geographical boundaries.

The kingdom of Sardinia—it is not a very considerable one (but it sent us 15,000 soldiers, at its own expense, to fight by the side of our soldiers during the Crimean war, whilst Austria stood aloof)—has for a long while past been compelled to keep up armaments beyond her strength—I say, emphatically, she has been compelled to do this, or, when circumstances permitted, the Austrian regiments would have been upon her, ere assistance could arrive. Count Cavour has endeavoured to open the eyes of Europe to this truth. Of course, English and foreign capitalists who never consult any other barometer than the list of the Stock and Share Market, say loudly enough, "Why could not Piedmont adhere to the system of peaceful progress and commercial development? Therein lay safety!" Excellent language for Manchester or Liverpool; but these gentlemen quite forget that the Piedmontese are compelled to do what little they can in this direction in the presence of an Austrian *corps d'armée*, with its videttes within gunshot, ready to cross their frontier, and to extinguish the last spark of liberty in every Piedmontese hearth, whenever a hitch in European politics shall give them opportunity.

I must here quote a few passages from Count Cavour's note, as they throw a strong light upon this point. He writes:—"Three years will soon have expired since the King's Government, while calling the attention of Europe, by the organ of its Plenipotentiaries at the Congress of Paris, to the greivous state of Italy, protested against the extension of Austrian influence in the Peninsula *beyond the stipulations of the Treaties*; and announced that if a check were not put to it the result might be serious danger for the peace and tranquillity of the world. *The representations of Sardinia were favourably received by France and England!*" Again, I find a little further on:—"If His Majesty's Government proudly repelled the pretensions of Austria, which *demand modifications in the institutions of the country*, it did not assume a hostile attitude towards her, when the Cabinet of Vienna thought proper to seize a pretext, judged futile by almost all the statesmen of Europe, to break off with *éclat* diplomatic relations with Sardinia." England and France have broken off diplomatic relations with the King of the Two Sicilies at one end of the Peninsula—Austria has put Sardinia to the ban at the other. For brutal tyranny in the one case; because of constitutional liberty on the other. But to proceed with Count Cavour's circular:—"But now the extraordinary military measures which the Cabinet of Vienna has just taken, and which are evidently directed against Sardinia, whose armaments are relatively very weak, force the King's Government, without abandoning that reserve, to prepare itself against a danger which may become imminent. Those measures are known to Europe. I think it right, nevertheless, rapidly to recapitulate them."

At this point I would answer an objection which has been made to the circular of Count Cavour. It has been urged, that had it not been for the King of Sardinia's address to his officers, and for the Emperor Louis Napoleon's speech to M. Hübner, on the 1st of January, the additional 30,000 Austrians would not have been poured into Lombardy, and advanced to the very borders of Piedmont. Let me say—and I can never say it with sufficient force—that Count Cavour is referring to the *usual* condition of his master's kingdom. Piedmont is like a Swiss village, with an avalanche suspended over its head. What Count Cavour means—and what is the actual truth—is, that at any given moment the Austrians can bring an overwhelming force to bear upon his master's dominions. The rapidity with which the Austrian troops were concentrated on Sardinia's

threshold, is the best proof of the truth of his words. What matters who spoke the word—who raised the signal?—the danger was there already existing on the side of Piedmont, the power to crush her on that of Austria.

“ In the first days of January, before the King had pronounced the opening speech of the new Legislative Session, the Vienna Cabinet announced, in its official journal, the sending of a *corps d’armée* of 30,000 men into Italy. This corps, added to three others which are established there in a permanent manner, would increase the strength of the Austrian army to an extent very disproportionate with what the maintenance of order and of internal tranquillity could require.

“ At the same time that these troops were sent into Lombardy and Venetia with extraordinary rapidity, frontier battalions, which leave their country only in case of war, were known to arrive. The garrisons of Bologna and Ancona were reinforced. But, what is most serious, Austria concentrated considerable forces on our frontier; she collected between the Adda and the Ticino, and especially between Cremona, Piacenza, and Pavia, a real corps of operations, which certainly could not be destined to maintain order in these towns, which are of quite secondary importance.

“ For some days the bank of the Ticino presented the appearance of a country in which war is about to break out.

“ The villages were occupied by detached corps—everywhere quarters were prepared and measures were taken to form stores. Vedettes were placed even on the bridge of Buffalora, which marks the limits of the two countries. I say nothing of the menacing discourse held publicly at Milan and in other towns by the greater part of the Austrian officers, without excepting those of eminent rank, for I know that one must not always render Governments responsible for the language of their agents.

“ But I think it necessary to call attention to the reception given at Venice to the troops coming from Vienna, and to the ostentation with which vast preparations have been made at Piacenza by occupying forts which were constructed in defiance of treaties, and which the Austrians have appeared to neglect for some time past.”

It may be, that the King of Sardinia was indiscreet—the Emperor of the French precipitate—but this does not detract from the truth of Count Cavour’s position, that Sardinia is

at Austria's mercy, save she secure the hearty and continuous support of her Allies in the Crimean war.

If the public mind of Europe could be freed from illusion, who would be found to be the substantial aggressor in this dispute—Austria, or Sardinia?

I would respectfully submit to your Lordship's consideration, that when England and France accepted the alliance of Sardinia during the Russian war, they did actually and equitably contract obligations towards that weaker State in the hour of her distress. France, my Lord, has behaved more loyally, more nobly, than England in the matter. Suppose, I say, suppose Count Cavour's representation to be true—suppose, I say, suppose that England and France did make the declarations alleged during the Conferences at Paris—will England now stand by with folded arms, and leave Sardinia to her fate? Already, my Lord, we hear of Victor Emmanuel's abdication, unless his allies come to his support.

And now I have done, though I could well wish that the duty of making these representations had devolved upon some one who could have given more powerful expression to the truth. The struggle in Italy is, my Lord, no new one, and it cannot be better described than by the words of England's noblest statesman, when speaking of the parties to our own great civil war:—"Talk as you will," said Charles James Fox, "nobody shall ever persuade me that the cause of tyranny was not at stake on one side, the cause of liberty on the other." Austria has done in Italy what Charles would never have dared to attempt in England, though the world is now two hundred years older than when that mistaken King expiated his policy upon the scaffold, one January morning, yonder, at Whitehall.

The people of England look to you, my Lord, in this matter. Do not,—for you are powerful enough to prevent it,—allow the glorious name of our country to be dragged through the mud in aid of that unexampled oppression of body and soul which is now in progress throughout the Italian Peninsula. Few statesmen have had so great a hold upon the affection and respect of Englishmen as your Lordship. If ever, now, use your influence to deter them from the horrible iniquity of lending their aid to maintain the Papal and Austrian system in Italy. Surely, without blasphemy, I may say of my countrymen, when the agony of so many of their fellow-creatures is at issue, "*They know not what they do!*" But your

Lordship has seen it, and known it ; and it is not the will, but the understanding, of England which is at fault. We are now at one of the turning-points of history. I believe it to be in your Lordship's power, at the present moment, to do more for the liberties of mankind than any other Englishman. Had I known of a name more pure, more honourable—one which carried more weight in England—than that of the distinguished statesman who now so worthily represents the historic fame of the Russells, I would never have troubled your Lordship with these Letters.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your faithful Servant,

AN ENGLISH LIBERAL.

February 24, 1859.



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